

KOGARATSU

After the snow



A Geographic Guide to the World's Great Wine Regions

By Michael

Davidson and
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Foreword by

Robert M. Parker,
Master Sommelier



KODAK KODAK

AFTER THE
SHOW

— Robert Nichols
— Bruce



Please left
to right

Colder than the snow,
the winter moon
on white hair

Joso



After the Snow



...DO NOT FEAR, LITTLE GIRL!

YOU CAN THINK OF ME AS
YOUR MOTHER! DO NOT FEAR,
DO NOT FEAR ANYMORE!

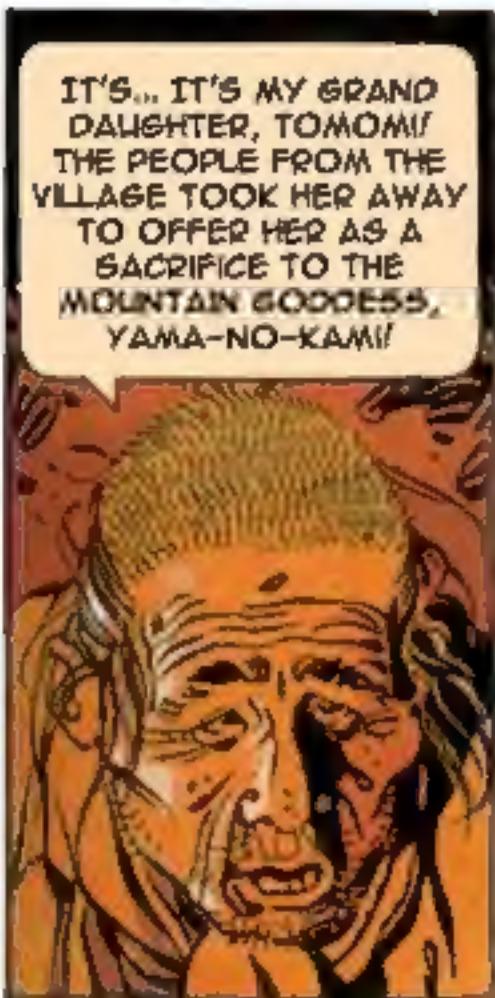
...FROM NOW
ON, YOU WON'T
HAVE TO BEND
YOUR HEAD!



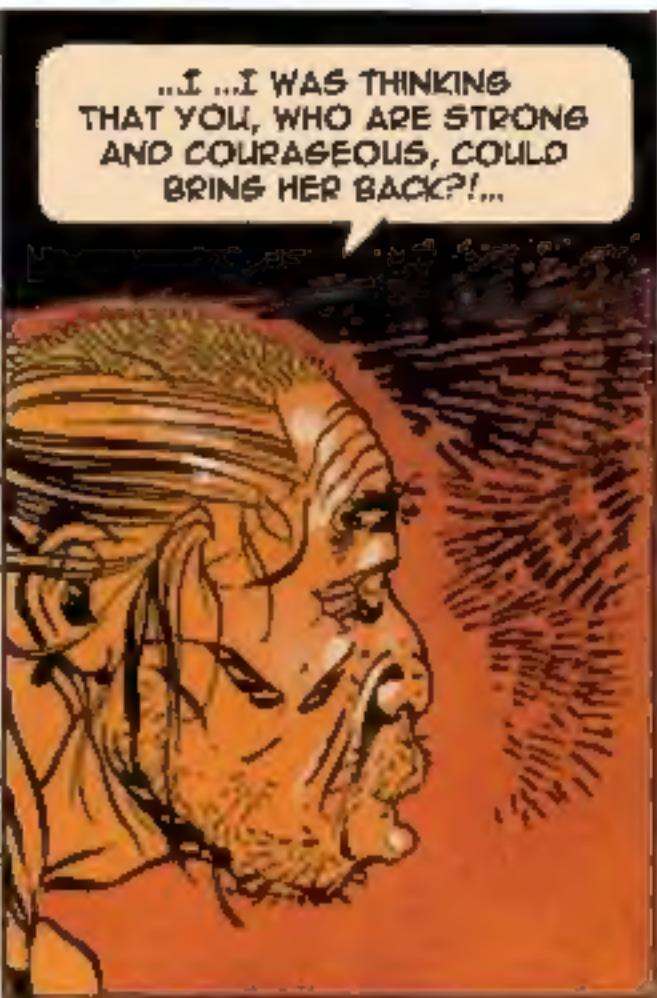
...YOU OFFERED ME FOOD SO I WOULD LISTEN TO YOU! I HAVE EATEN, BUT SO FAR I HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING! SPEAK!



IT'S... IT'S MY GRAND DAUGHTER, TOMOMI! THE PEOPLE FROM THE VILLAGE TOOK HER AWAY TO OFFER HER AS A SACRIFICE TO THE MOUNTAIN GODDESS, YAMA-NO-KAMI!



...I ...I WAS THINKING THAT YOU, WHO ARE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS, COULD BRING HER BACK?!



...YOU MUST BRING HER BACK, SAMURAI! IF YOU DON'T, THE GODDESS'S TENGUS WILL EAT HER HEAD! I BEG YOU TO ACCEPT!



HMM... A CHILD TO SAVE... MAYBE! BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT...



HOW ARE YOU GOING TO CONVINCE ME TO ACCEPT THIS MISSION?





...BE CAREFUL WITH THE VILLAGERS, ESPECIALLY THEIR CHIEF, THE OLD OYABUN! AND BEWARE OF THE TENGUS LURKING IN THE MOUNTAIN! AS FOR MY LITTLE TOMOMI, YOU'LL RECOGNIZE HER EASILY, SHE'S ONLY THIRTEEN AND...

...SOME OF HER HAIR IS WHITE LIKE SNOW! DON'T FORGET!

STUPID PEASANTS, THE SMALLEST TALE FRIGHTENS THEM! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING REAL, THOUGH, FOR THOSE WRETCHES TO OFFER SUCH A SUM!

...AND THE GOLD HAD THE SEAL OF THE KASUMIS, THE CRACKED BELL! HOW THE HELL DID THEY OBTAIN IT? ...THIS CASE REALLY IS STRANGE.

WHY? ...WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL HIM ABOUT THE FEMALE DEMONS?

...WHY DIDN'T YOU MENTION THE CEMETRY THEY'RE HAUNTING, AND THE CASTLE? WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT ALL THE OTHERS WHO NEVER CAME BACK?

ALAS, ALAS! ...YOU KNOW THAT IF I HAD TOLD HIM, THE VILLAGERS WOULD HAVE KILLED US! ...MAYBE THIS SAMURAI WOULD HAVE DONE IT HIMSELF... AND HE WOULD HAVE PROBABLY BEEN RIGHT...

ALAS...

...PLEASE, DO NOT
LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT,
I'M NOT EVIL!

...IT IS NOT MY FAULT. IT IS ALL BECAUSE
OF THOSE PEASANTS FROM THE VALLEY,
THOSE YOU LOVED WHEN YOU WERE A KID,
THOSE YOU LOVED BECAUSE YOU WERE
PART OF THEIR COMMUNITY!

...THEIR VILENESS STAINED
AND BROKE EVERYTHING!
IS IT NOT JUSTICE THAT
NOW THEY MUST PAY?

...IT'S THE SAME EVERYTIME!

...EVEN THOUGH WE'RE USED
TO IT, IN A SINGLE NIGHT, WINTER
SWOOPS DOWN ON THE VALLEY
AND FREEZES EVERYTHING!

...EVERY TIME... HOW
ARE YOU LISTENING?

SABU.

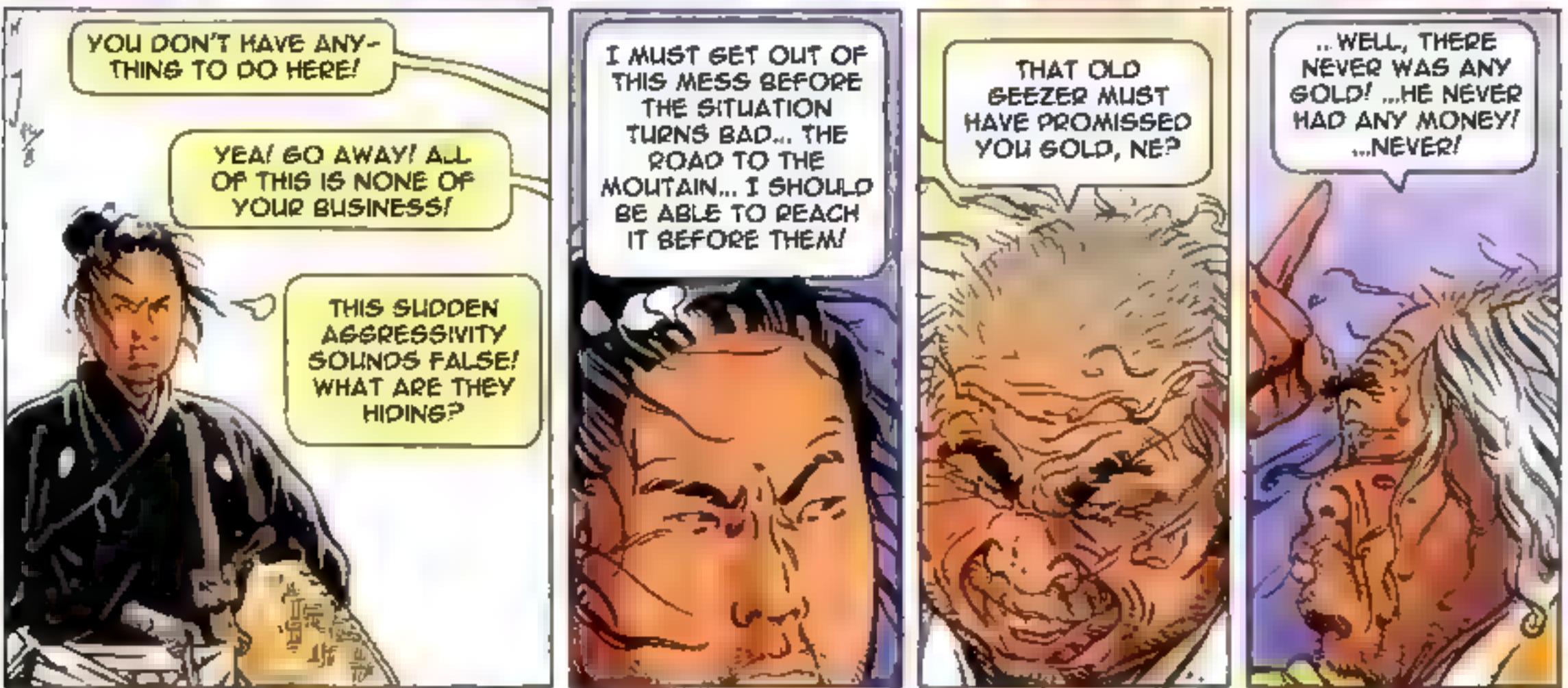
SHUT UP!
YOU'RE
SPEAKING OF
MISFORTUNE?

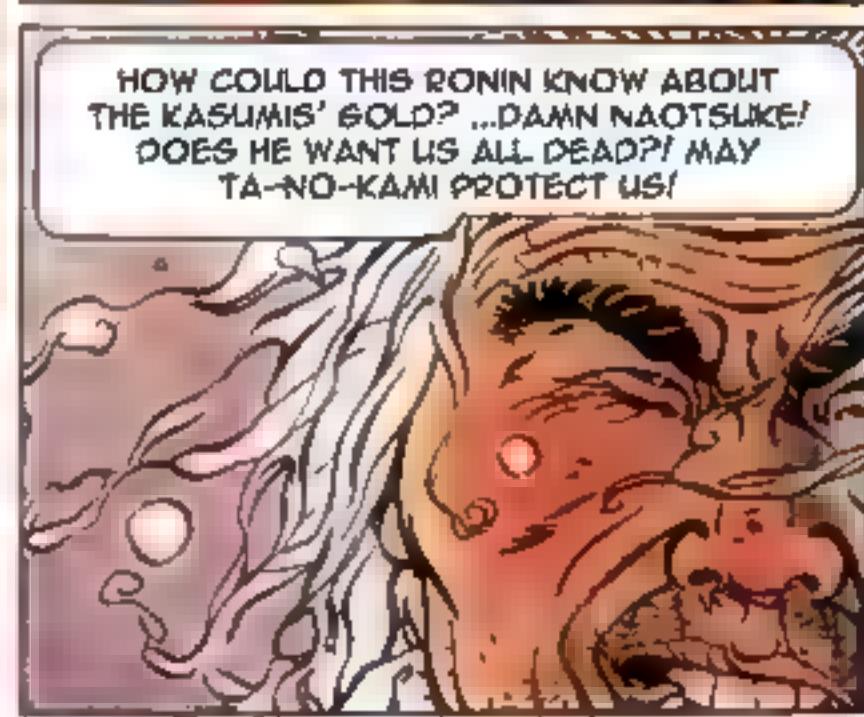
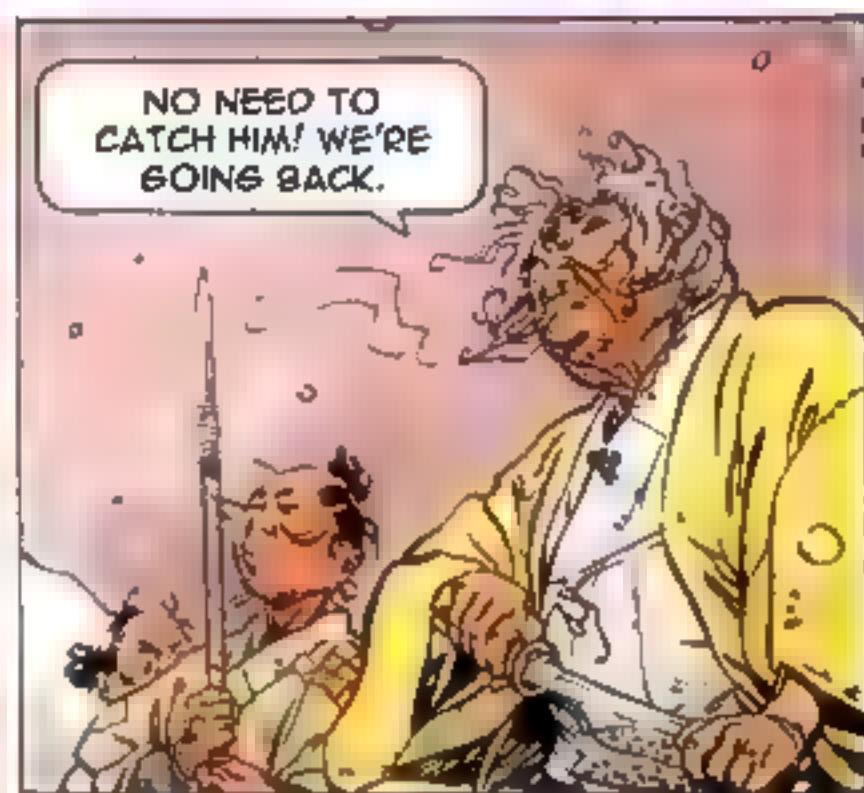
...WELL, THERE IT
COMES, BY THE ROAD!

WE
MUST TELL
OYABUN!

A SAMURAI! DAMMIT!
THE OLD NAOTSUKE
DID IT AGAIN! MAY
TA-NO-KAMI HELP US!







IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO AT THAT TIME. WE WERE A MODEST CLAN WITH LITTLE POWER, BUT NONTHELESS FAMOUS.

A TREMENDOUS BATTLE HAD JUST TAKEN PLACE, AND WE HAD LOST! ...MY HUSBAND, MY SONS, MY BROTHERS, OUR DEAR SAMURAI'S. SO MANY PROUD WARRIOR'S! THEY WERE ALL DEAD!

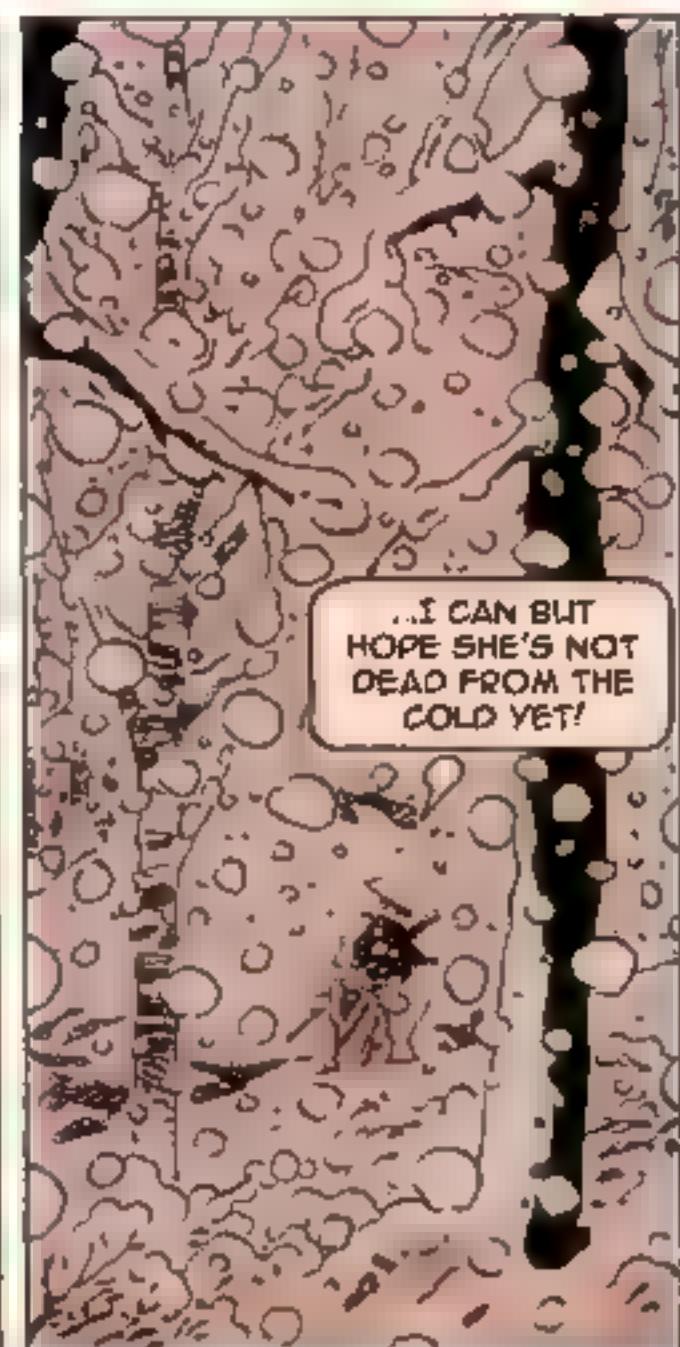
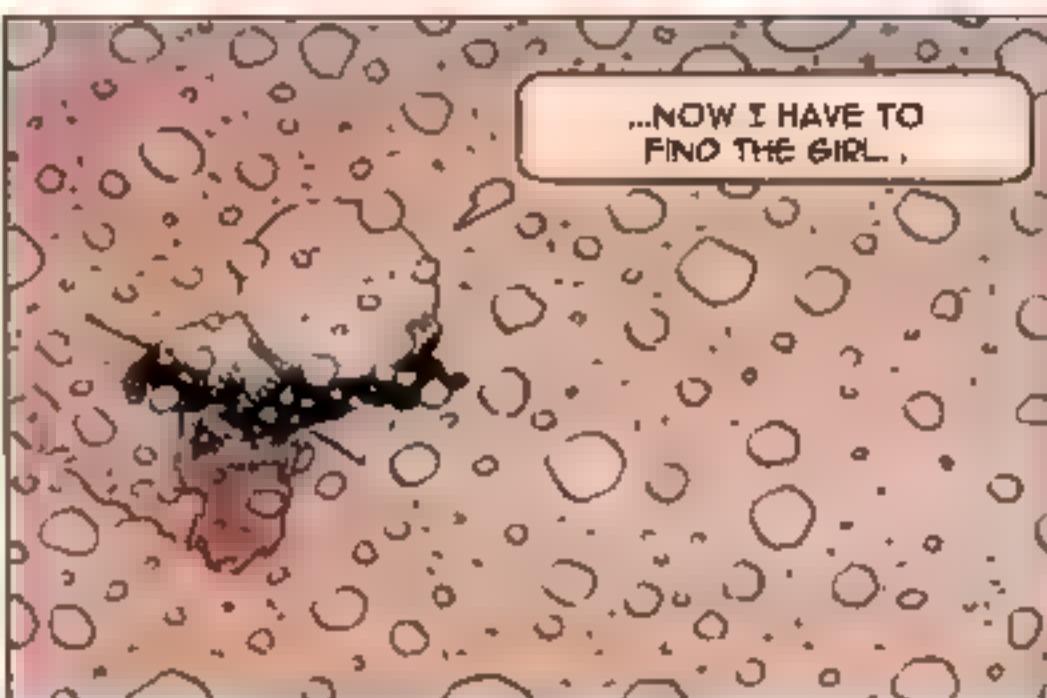
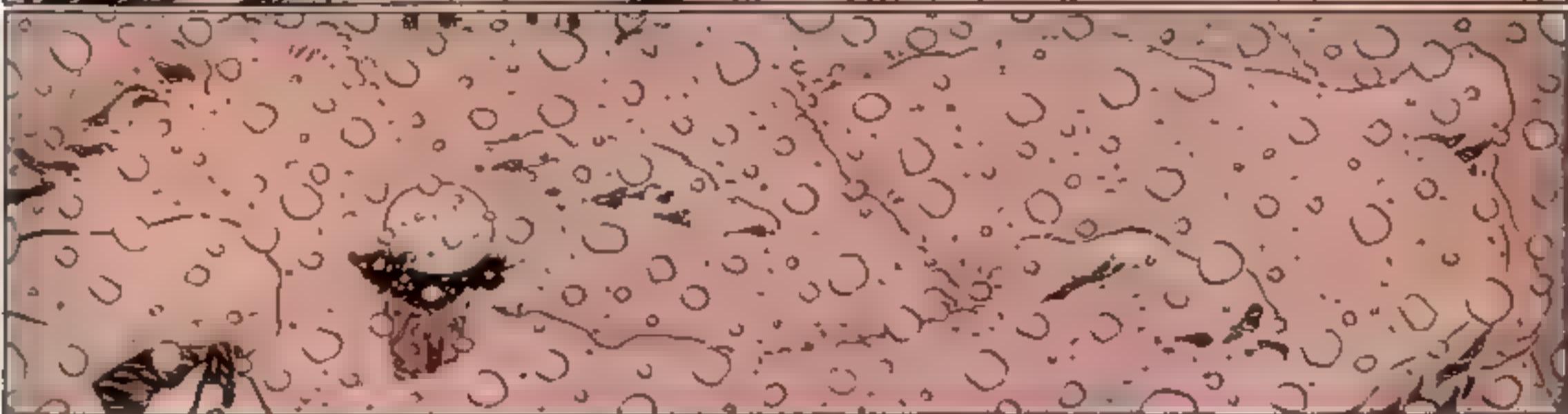
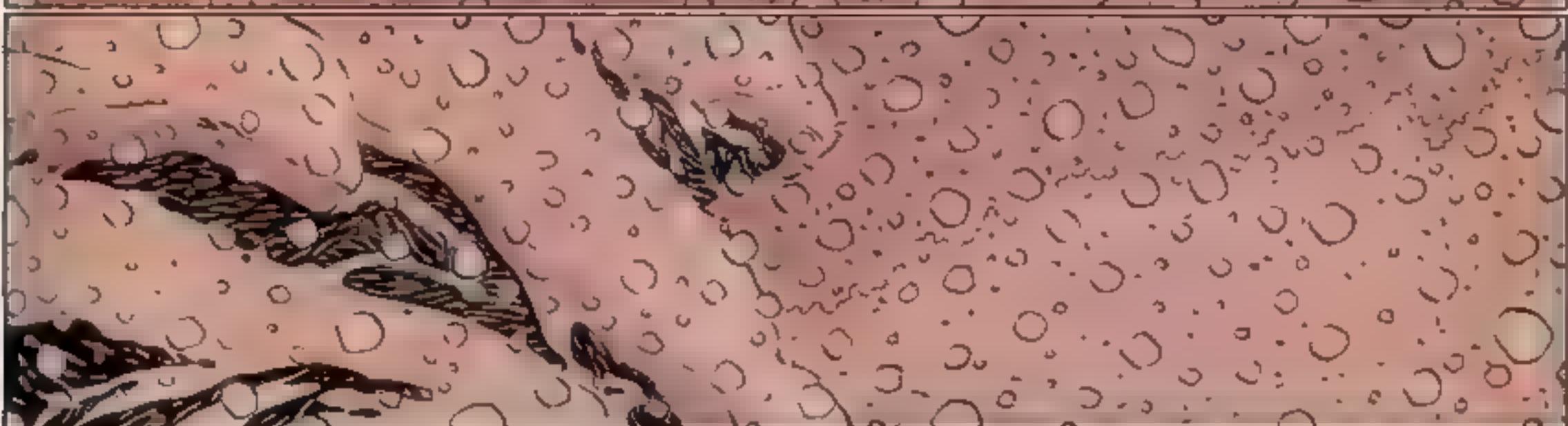
...WAR DIDN'T TAKE ALL OF THEM BUT WE HAD HEARD OF THEIR DEFEAT BEFORE THEIR RETURN...

PEASANTS CAN LIVE STANDING ON THEIR KNEES FOR THEIR WHOLE LIFE, BUT THEY CAN NEVER FORGIVE ANY WEAKNESS TO THOSE WHO RULE OVER THEM...



There is no more sky or earth
Nothing but the snow
Never to stop falling

Hachan



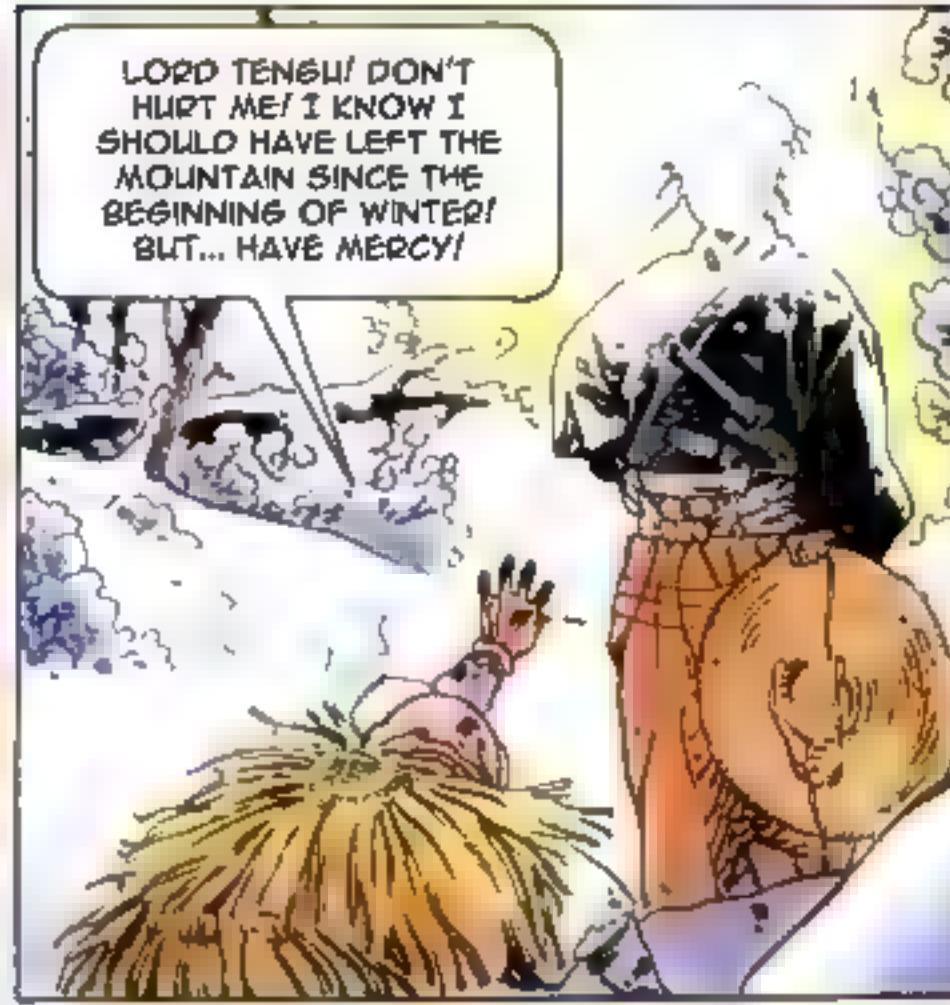
NOT TO MENTION THERE
ARE MANY POSSIBLE PATHS,
AND IF THE SNOW KEEPS
FALLING, I'LL HAVE NO
CHANCE TO FIND HER!

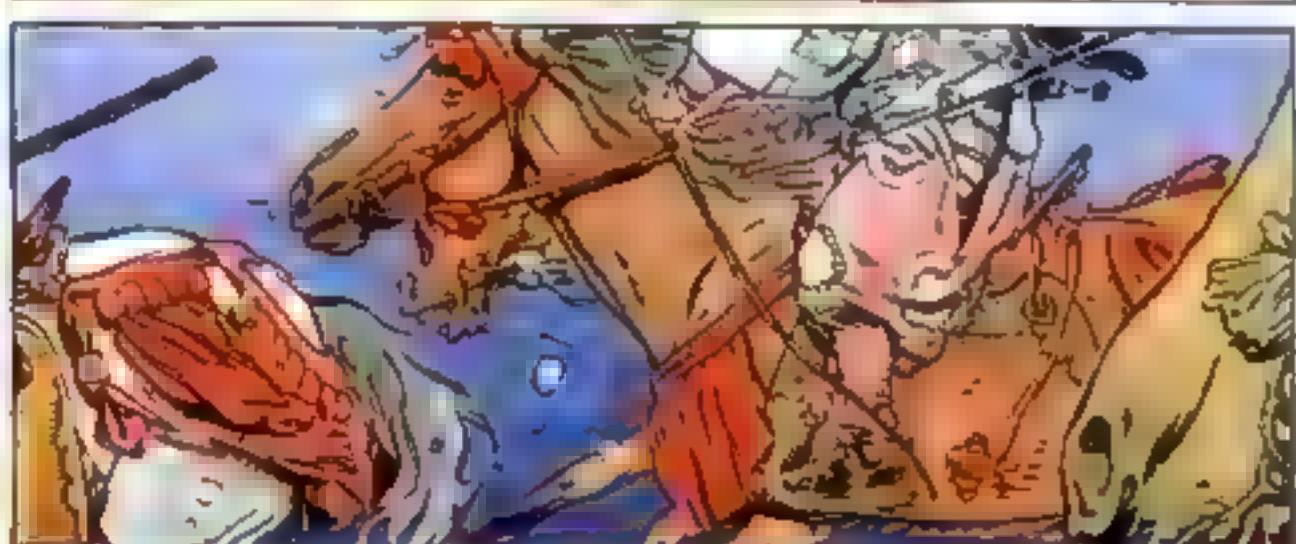
WHAT KIND OF SITUATION DID I
GET MYSELF INTO? I ACCEPTED
AN ODD MISSION AND...

...I HAVE ALL THE
LOCALS AGAINST
ME! MY LATE MASTER
WOULD HAVE BEEN
PROUD OF ME!

WE'RE CLOSING
IN ON HIM!

HA! HA! HA!





...WHAT IS THIS CULT CONCERNING YAMA-NO-KAMI ABOUT?

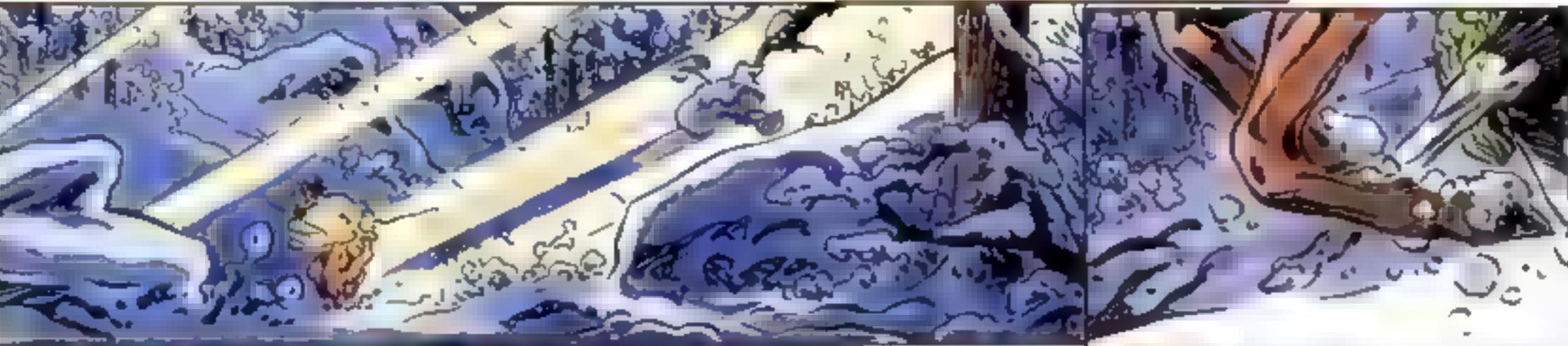
FOUR TIMES A YEAR, THEY GO IN THE MOUNTAIN AND OFFER QUANTITIES OF FOOD AS GIFTS! IN THE FIRST DAYS OF WINTER, THEY BRINGS A MAIDEN. SHE'S INTENDED TO SERVE THE GODDESS FOR A WHOLE YEAR... BUT, THEY NEVER COME BACK!

YOU MEAN THEY DIE FROM COLD IN THE MOUNTAIN.

NO! NO! ONCE I WENT TO THE SANCTUARY, THE DAY AFTER THE GIFT... HI! HI! HI! TO STEAL SOME FOOD! HI! HI! HI!

.. WELL, THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT! THE TENGUS HAD TAKEN EVERYTHING AWAY! FSHHH!

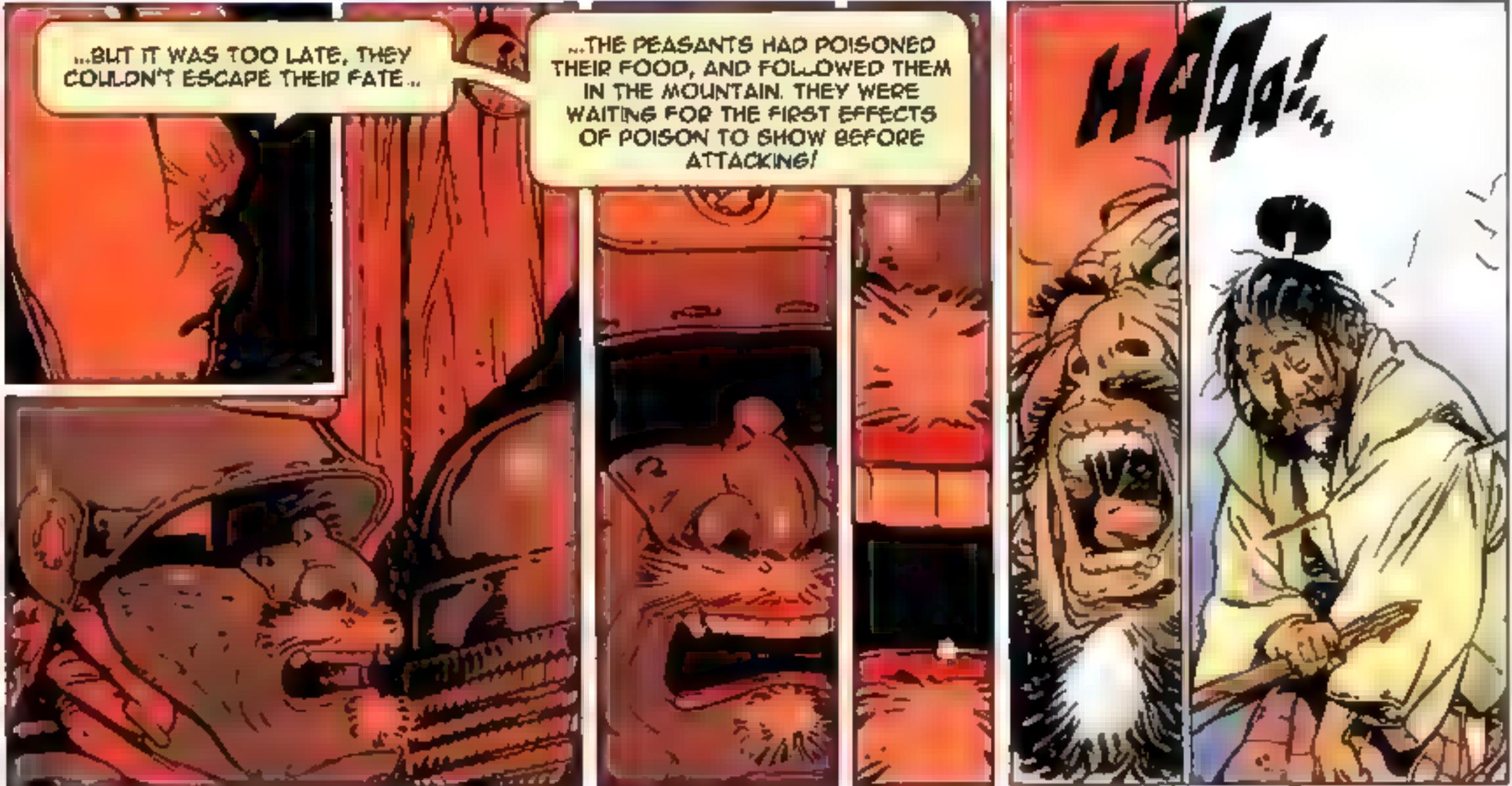
HOW VERY STRANGE THAT THOSE CREATURES SEEM TO BE INTERESTED IN WORDLY OBJECTS...

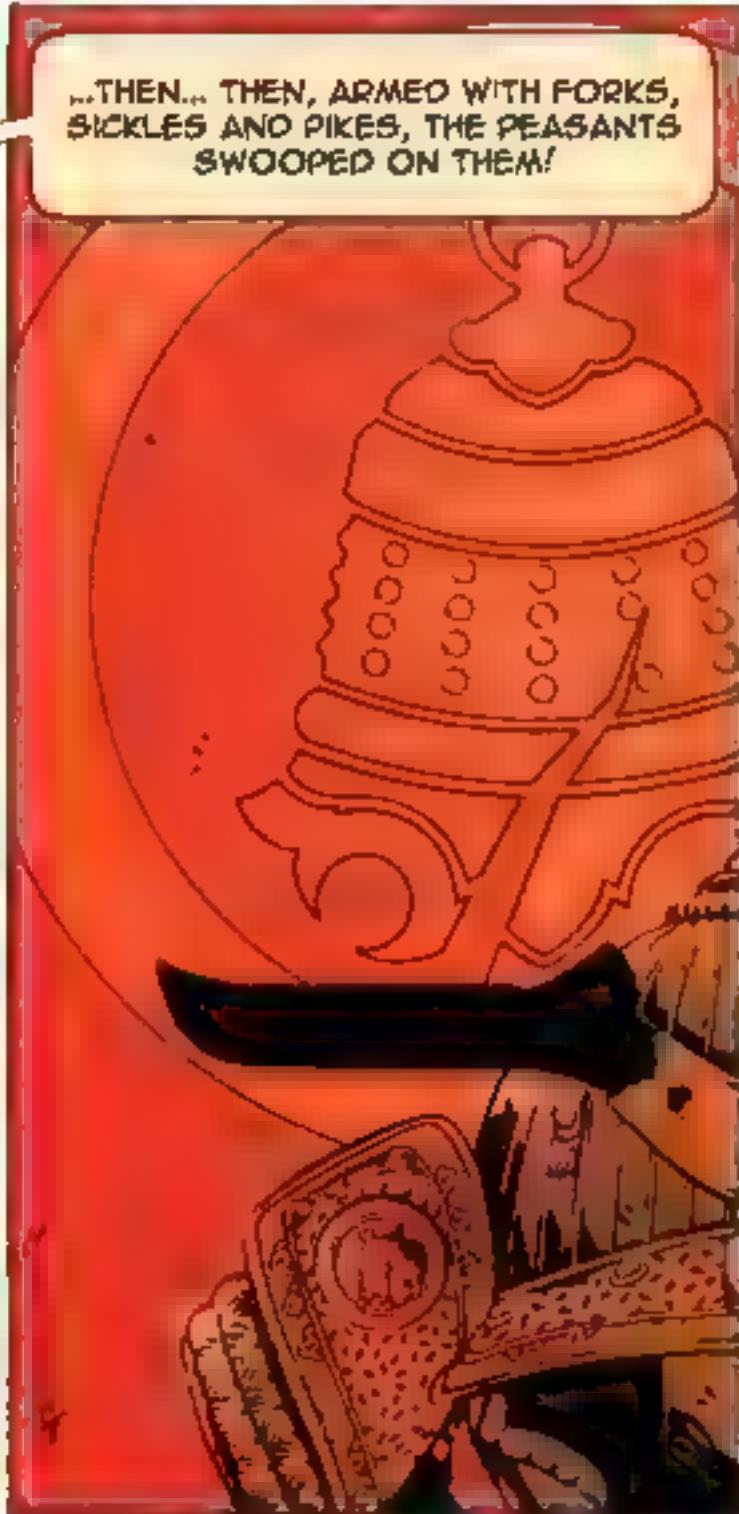
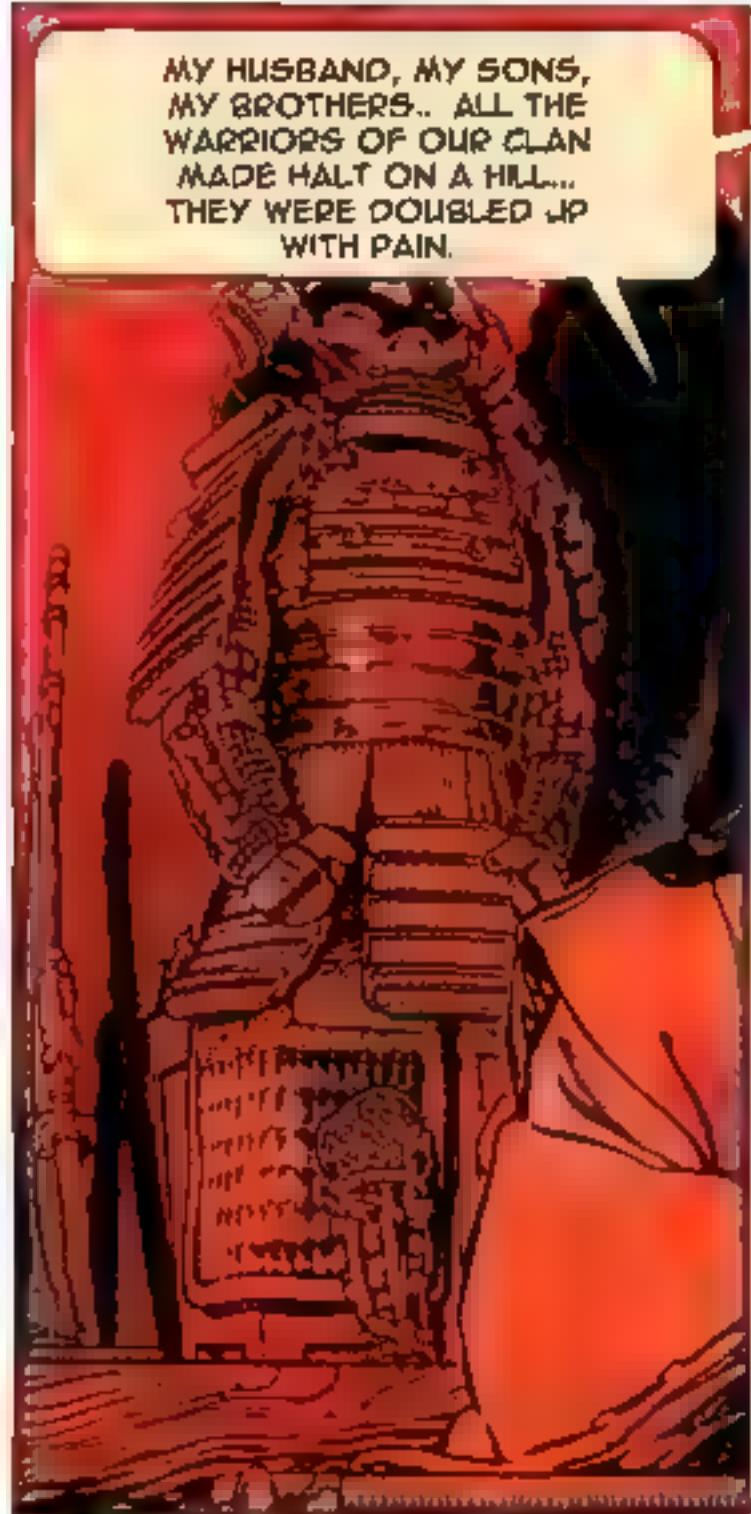


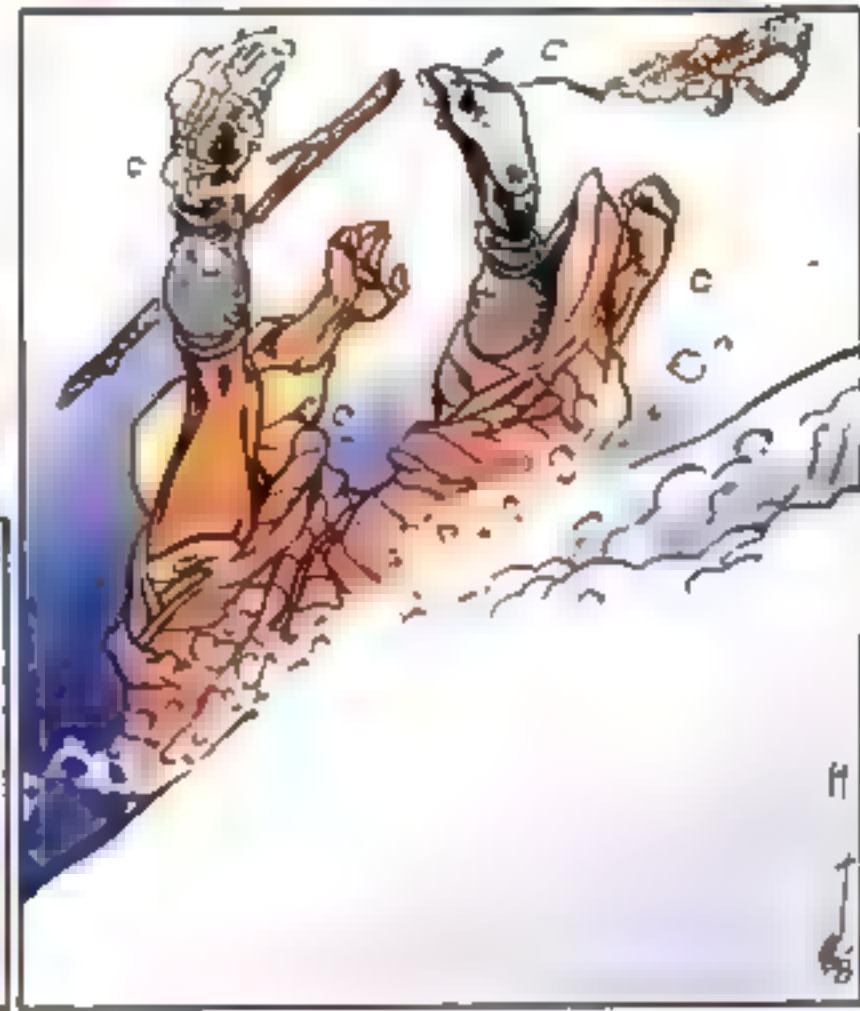
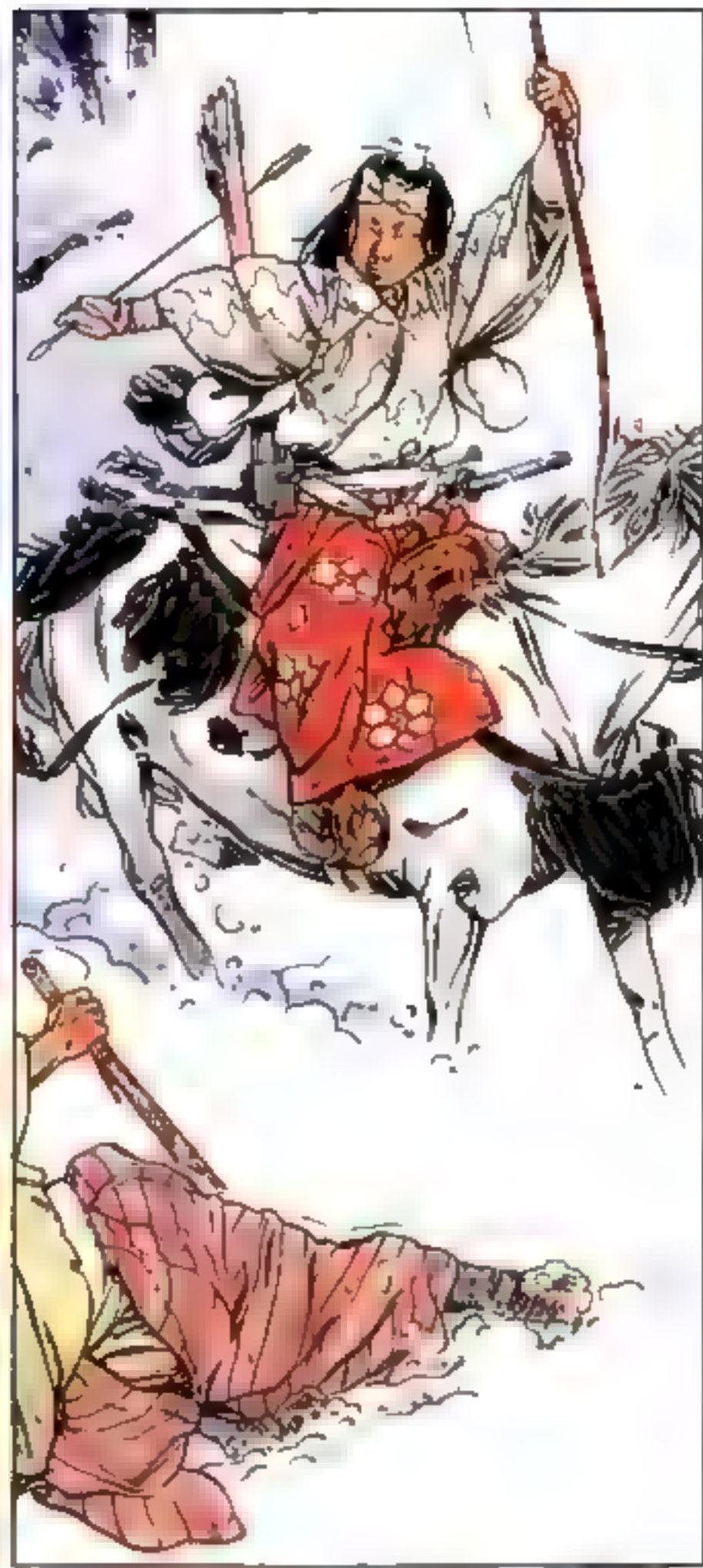
...BUT IT WAS TOO LATE, THEY COULDN'T ESCAPE THEIR FATE...

...THE PEASANTS HAD POISONED THEIR FOOD, AND FOLLOWED THEM IN THE MOUNTAIN. THEY WERE WAITING FOR THE FIRST EFFECTS OF POISON TO SHOW BEFORE ATTACKING!

HAGG!





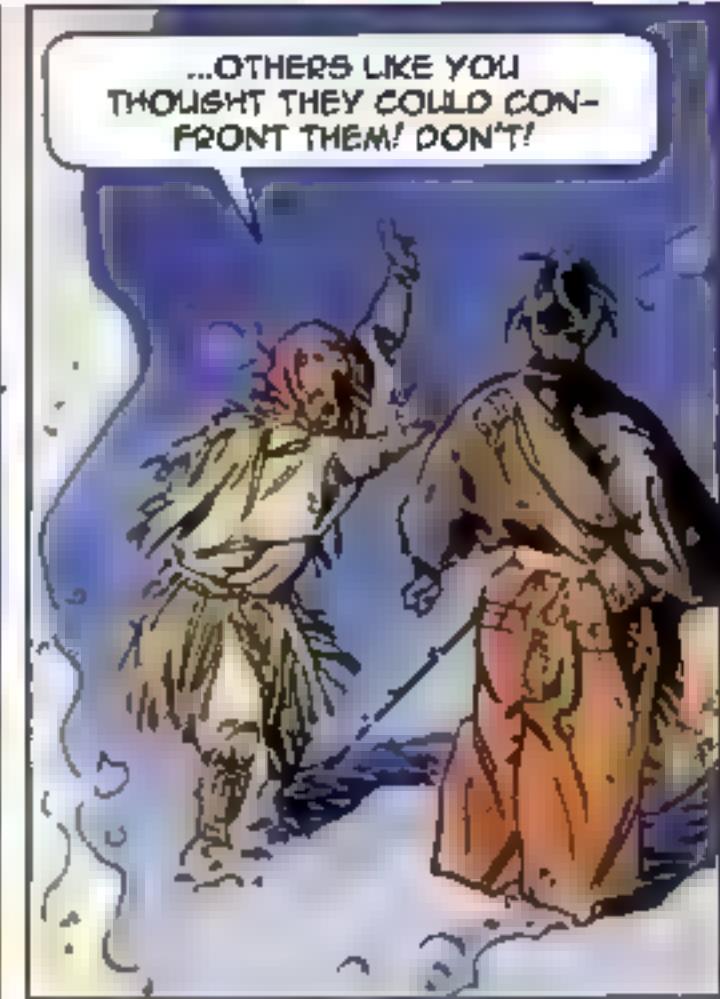


THEY ACTED THE WAY THE DO
WHEN THEY HUNT THE BEATERS PUSHED
THE WARRIOR THAT COULD STILL
WALK TOWARDS THE EXECUTIONERS!
..WE HEARD THEIR SCREAMS DURING
THE WHOLE NIGHT

.. THE PEASANTS DIDN'T SHOW
ANY PITY. NONE SURVIVED...

THEN THE
LOOTING
STARTED!

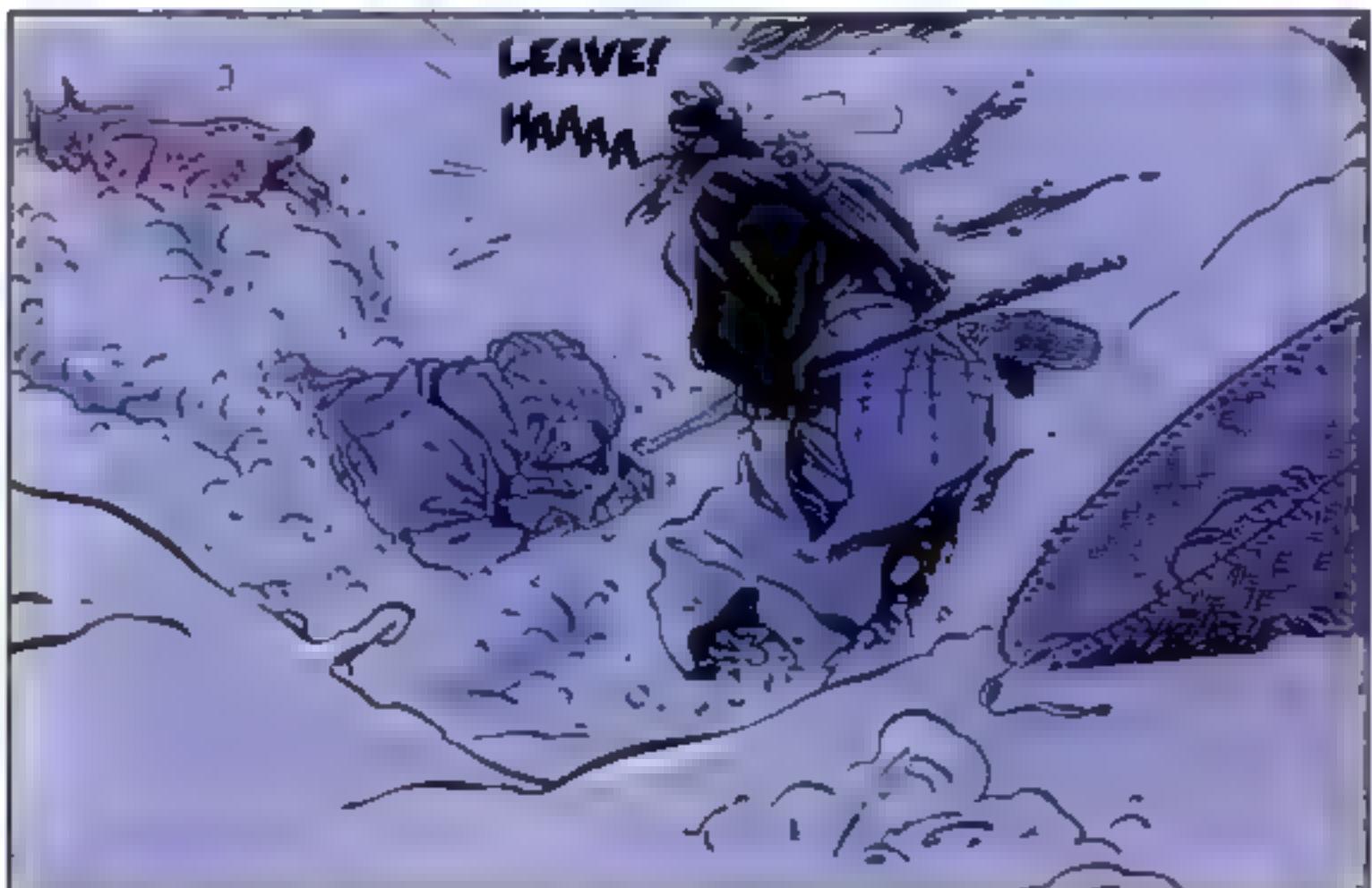
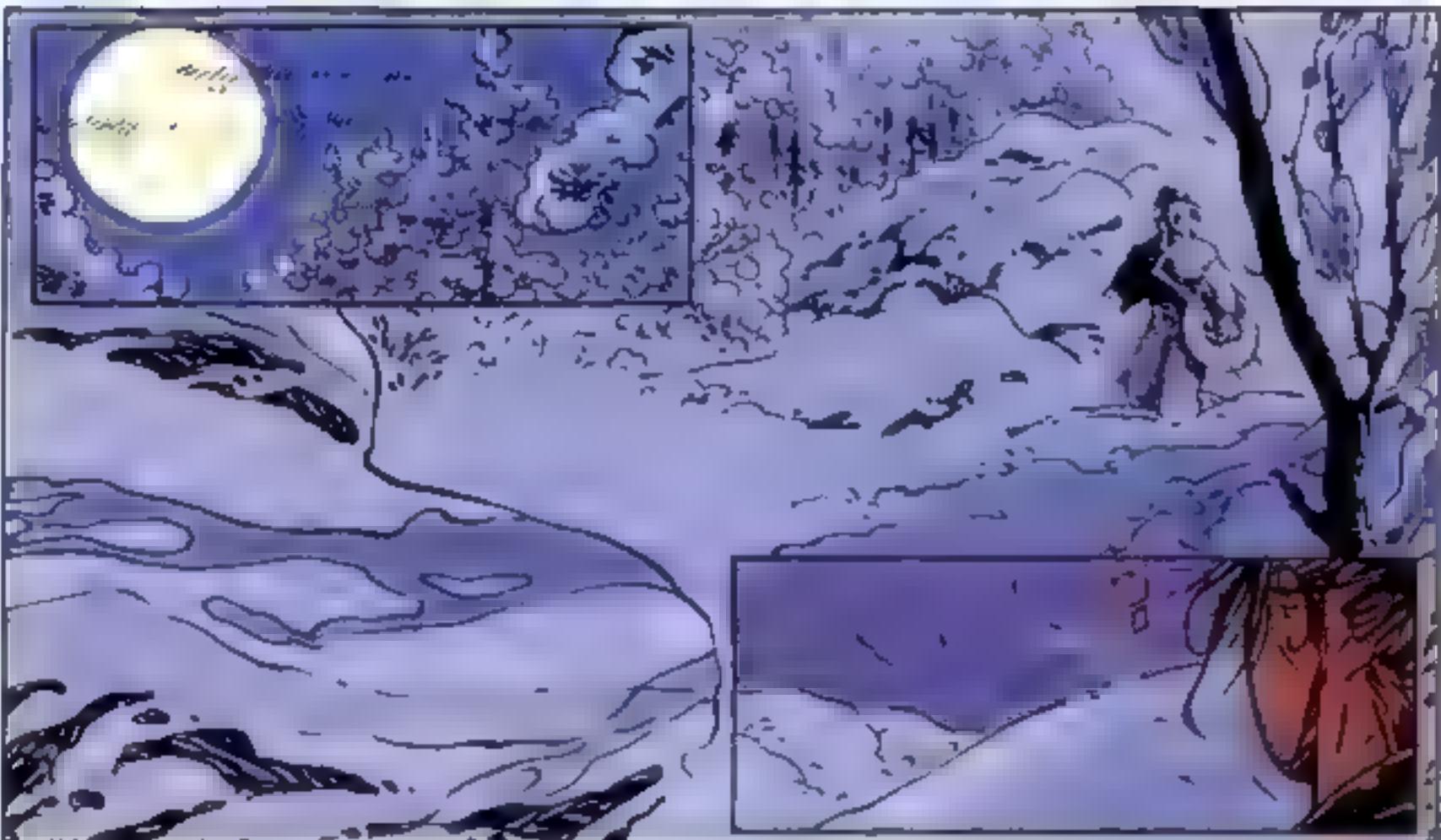




THOSE DEMONS CAN TAKE ANY FORM THEY WANT! THEY CAN CHANGE IN TREES! OR FOXES! BE CAREFUL!



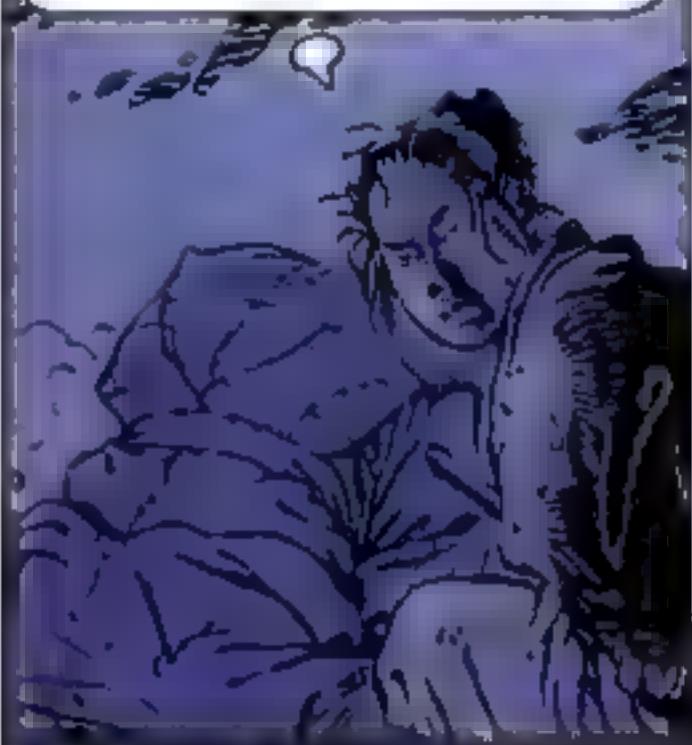
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE MAIN STRENGTH OF THESE SO CALLED TENGUS IS THE FEAR THEY INSPIRE AND IF THEY ARE FROM THIS WORLD AS I THINK, THEY SHOULD'VE LEFT TRACES BEHIND THEM...



THEIR "PREY", OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT... THE "TENJSU" ATE HIS HEAD... IT'S LIKE THE COAL MERCHANT SAID.

CLEAN WORK FLAWLESS. THOSE DEMONS' TEETH ARE TOO SHARP FOR MY TASTE.

FROM THE TRACES, THERE WAS QUITE A FEW OF THEM... SIX? MORE?



THESE ARE HOOF TRACES... SEEMS LIKE THEY HEADED FOR THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN...



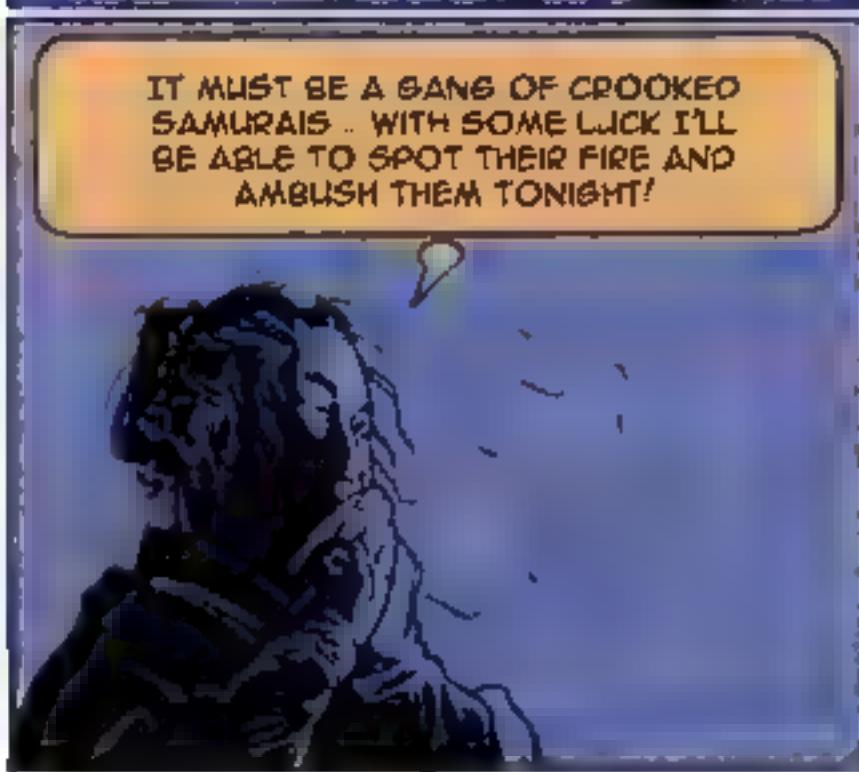
FOR A MOUNTAIN THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE FORBIDDEN, THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE AROUND... UNLESS EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED!

...THE ONLY THING I CAN DO NOW IS TO FOLLOW THEIR TRAIL!

WITH THE SURPRISE, I'LL HAVE TIME TO FREE TOMOMI AND WE'LL DISAPPEAR INTO THE NIGHT BEFORE THEY CAN REACT! ...OR SO I HOPE.

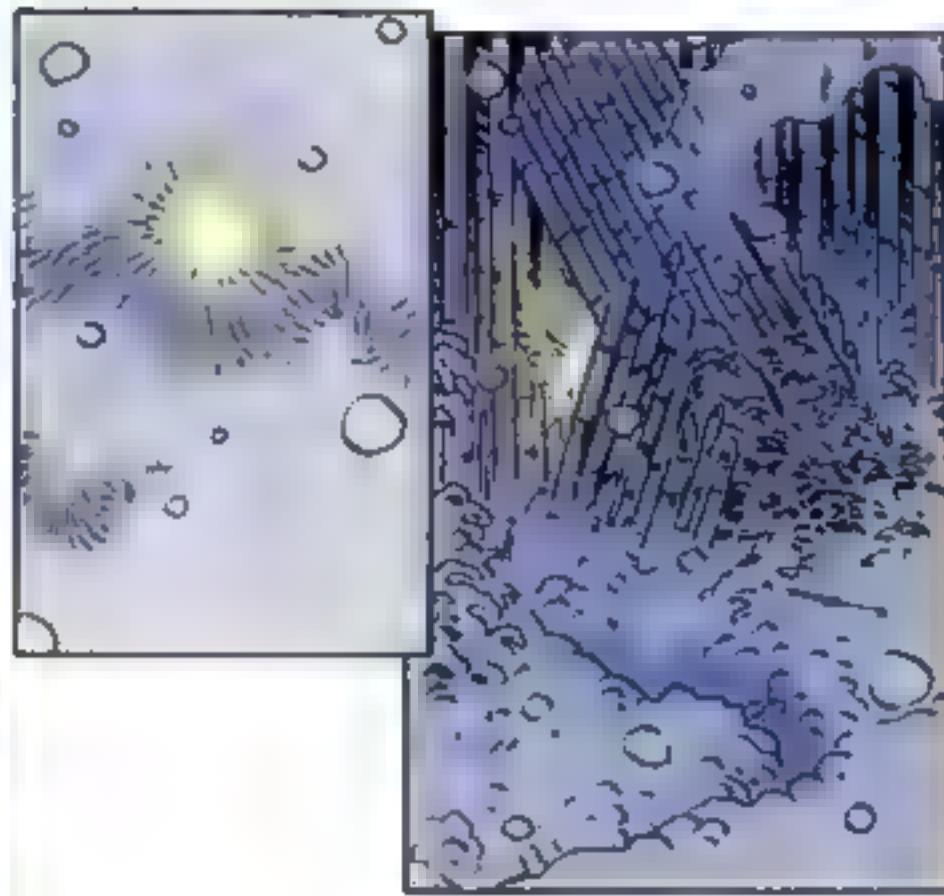


IT MUST BE A GANG OF CROOKED SAMURAI'S... WITH SOME LUCK I'LL BE ABLE TO SPOT THEIR FIRE AND AMBUSH THEM TONIGHT!



In the cold night
A lone moon
Runs across the sky
Minstrel

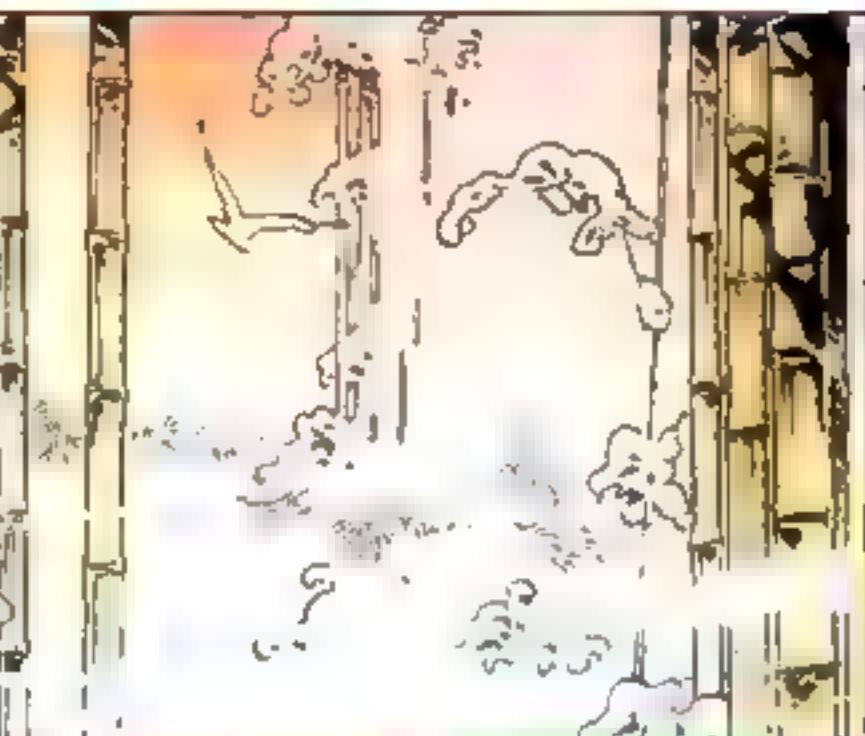


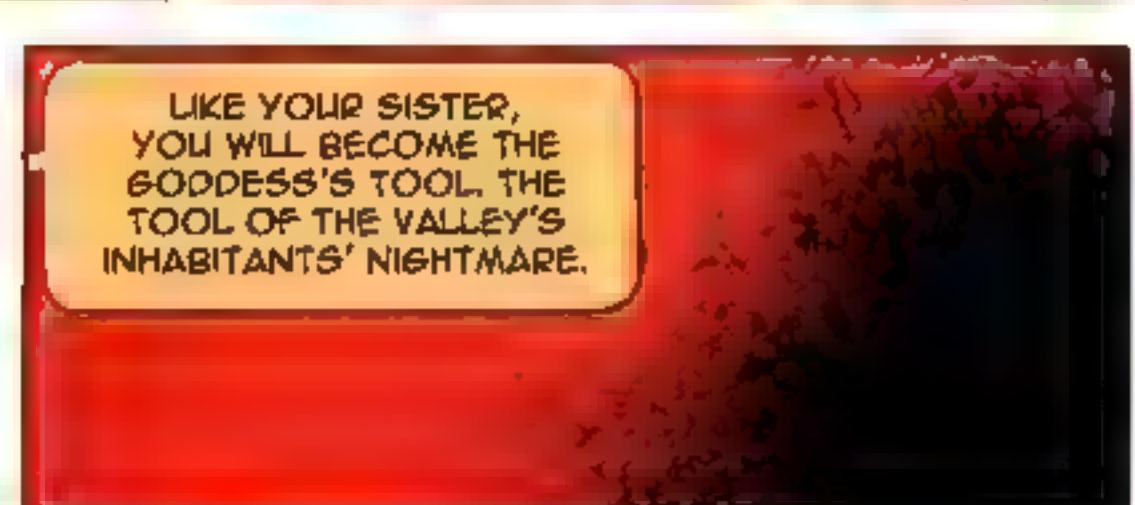


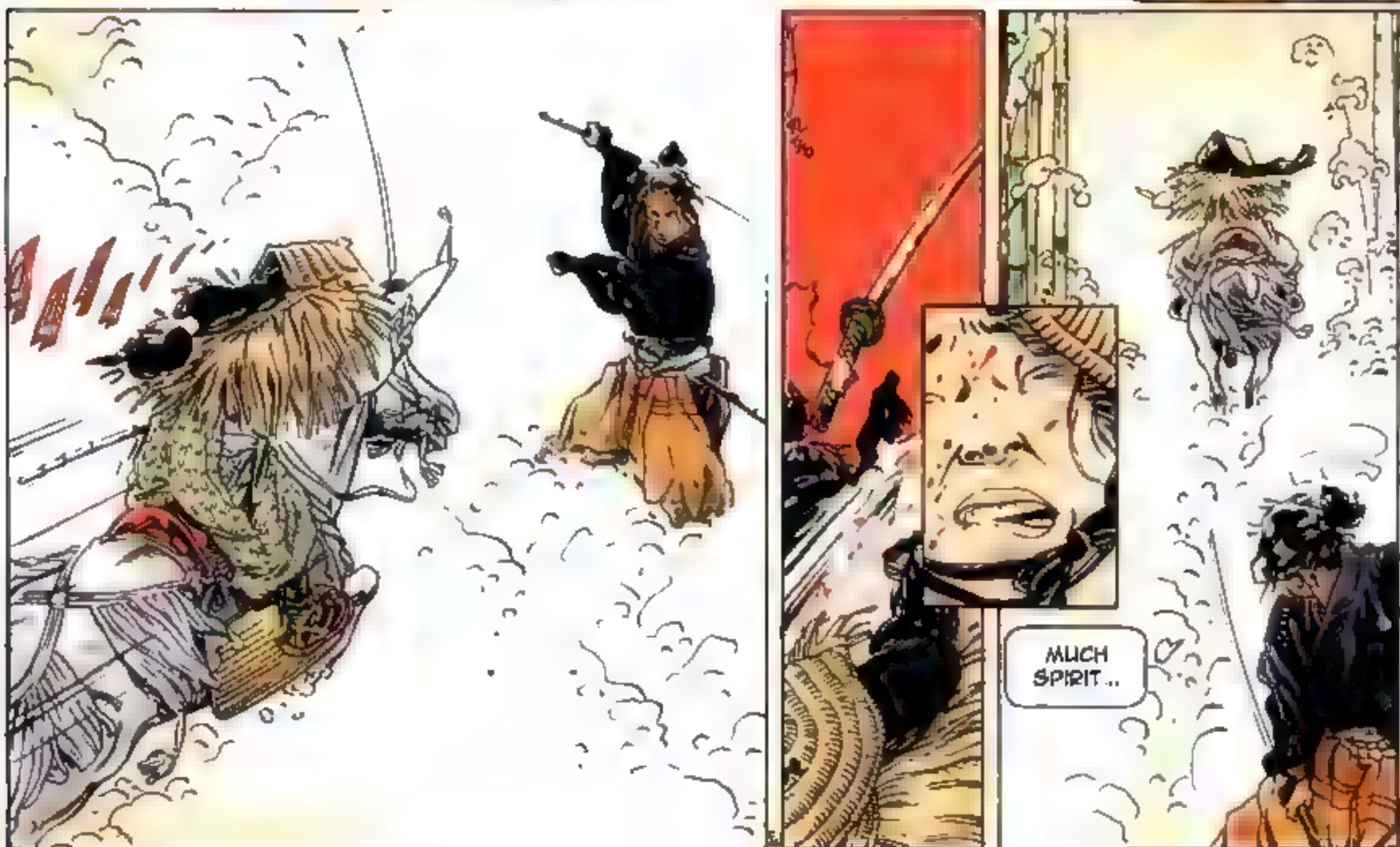
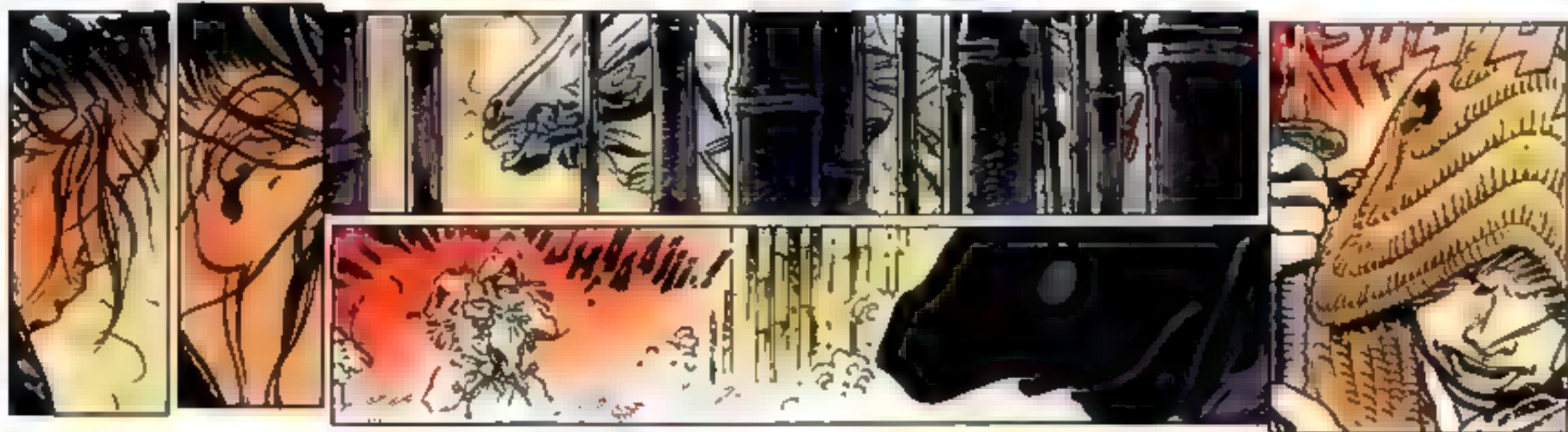
...WE, WOMEN OF THE DESTROYED CLAN, WERE DESPERATE, BUT YAMA-NO-KAMI, THE GODDESS OF THIS MOUNTAIN, TOLD ME WHAT TO DO, SINCE THAT TIME, THIS MOUNTAIN IS FORBIDDEN TO MEN!

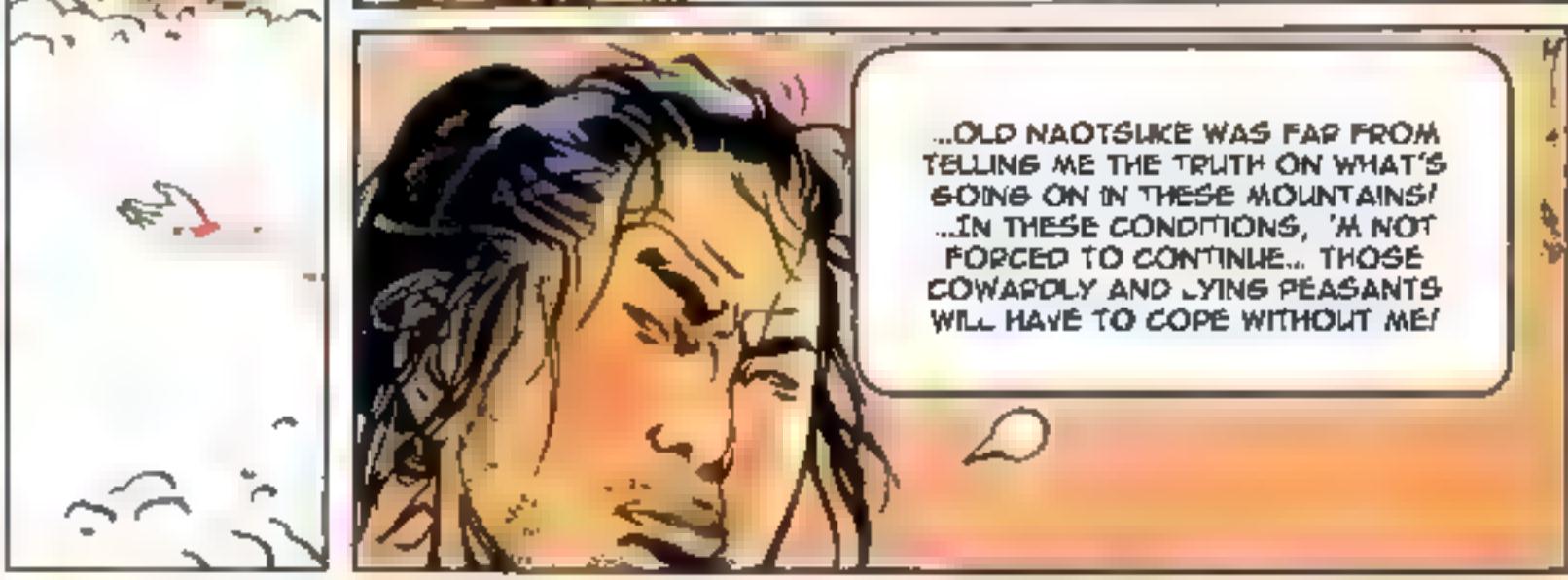
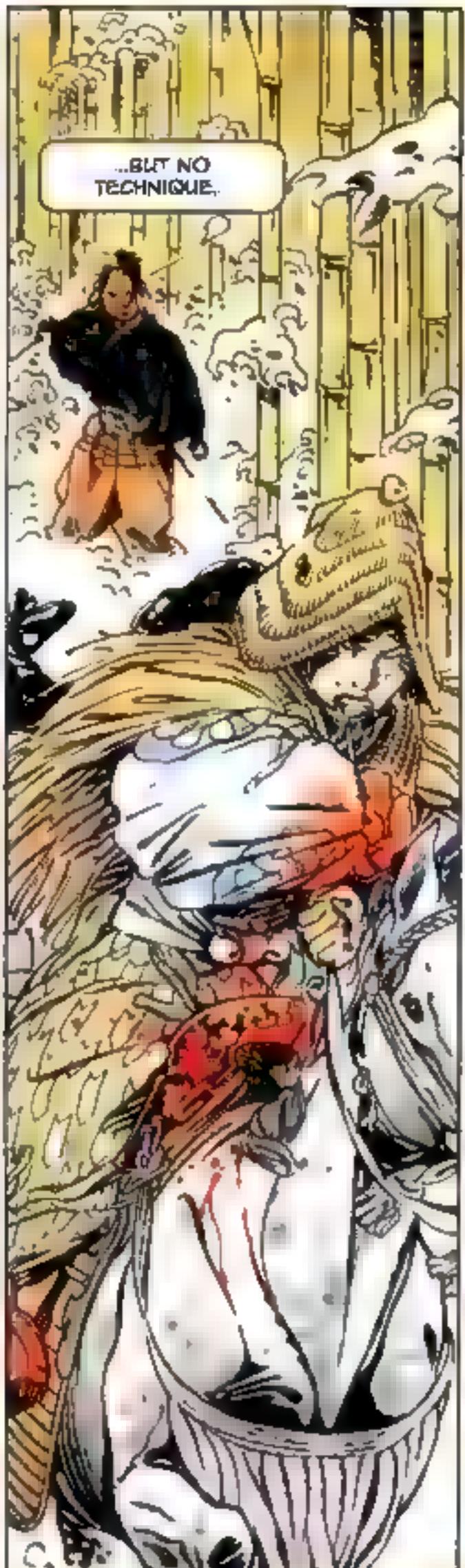
...THOSE FROM THE VALLEY! THE PEASANTS, MEN WHOSE LEGS ARE COVERED WITH MUD! THEY DARED TO DESTROY OUR FAMILIES! WE WILL CRUSH THEM! YAMA-NO-KAMI WILL SEE TO IT!

...THEY TRIED TO STARVE US! WE'LL PRESSURE THEM! YAMA-NO-KAMI WILL HELP US! THEY TRIED TO MAKE US LIVE IN FEAR! WE'LL TERRORIZE THEM, MY GIRL! I PROMISE YOU!







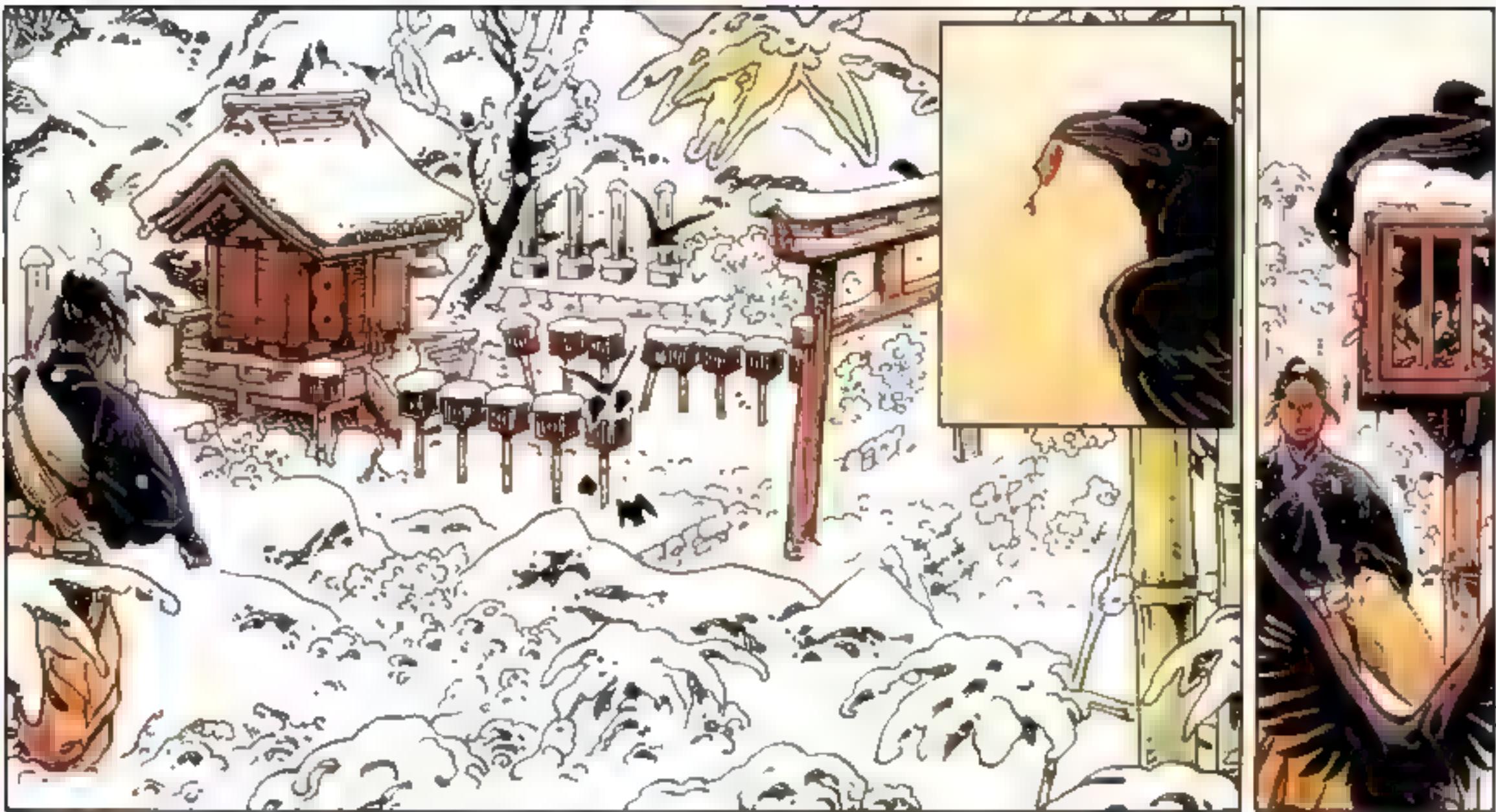


...I MUSTN'T GIVE IN TO FEAR!
THIS SUMMIT WAS ON MY LEFT YESTERDAY!
EVERYTHING LOOKS THE SAME AT NIGHT!

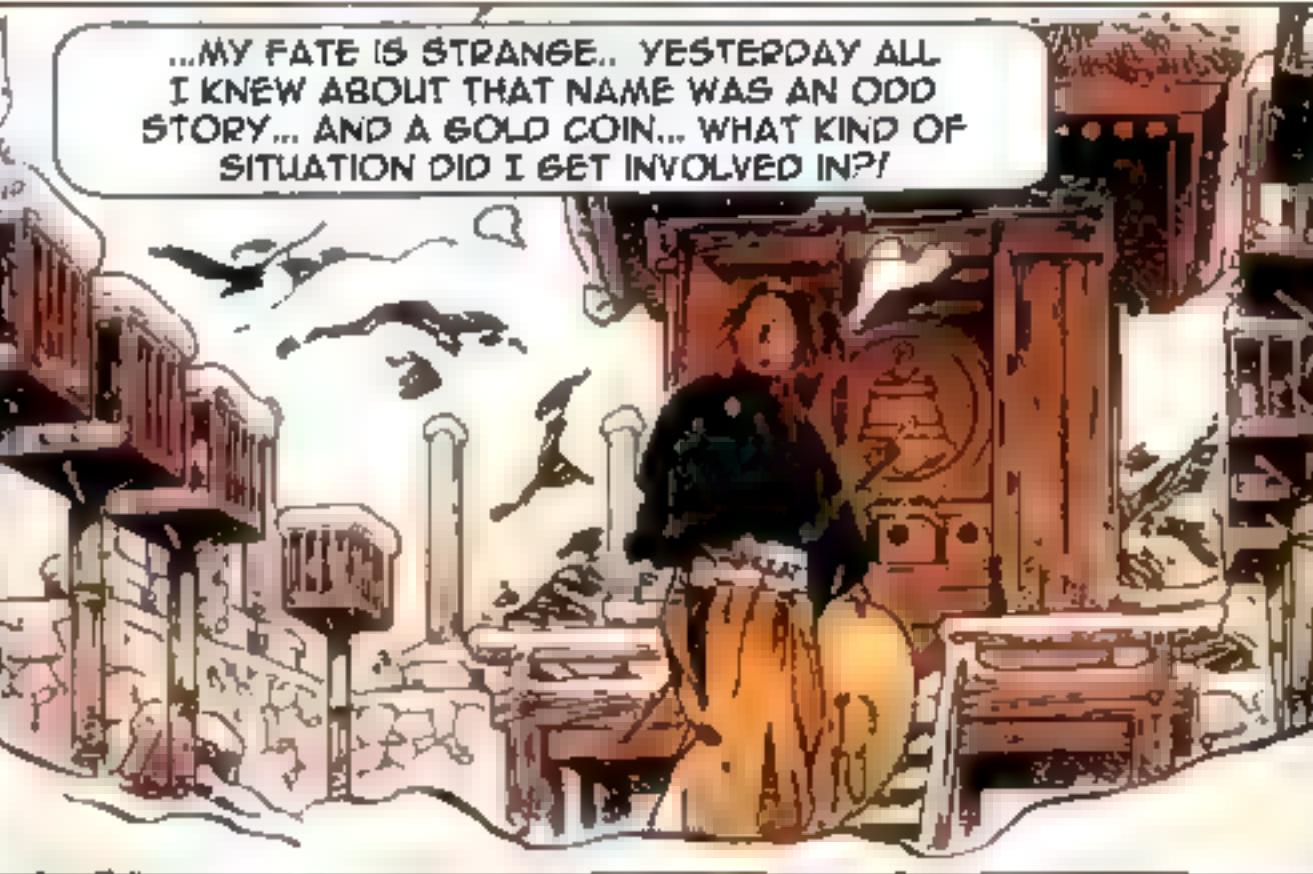


BEHIND THIS FOREST OF
BAMBOOS I SHOULD BE
ABLE TO SEE SOMETHING!



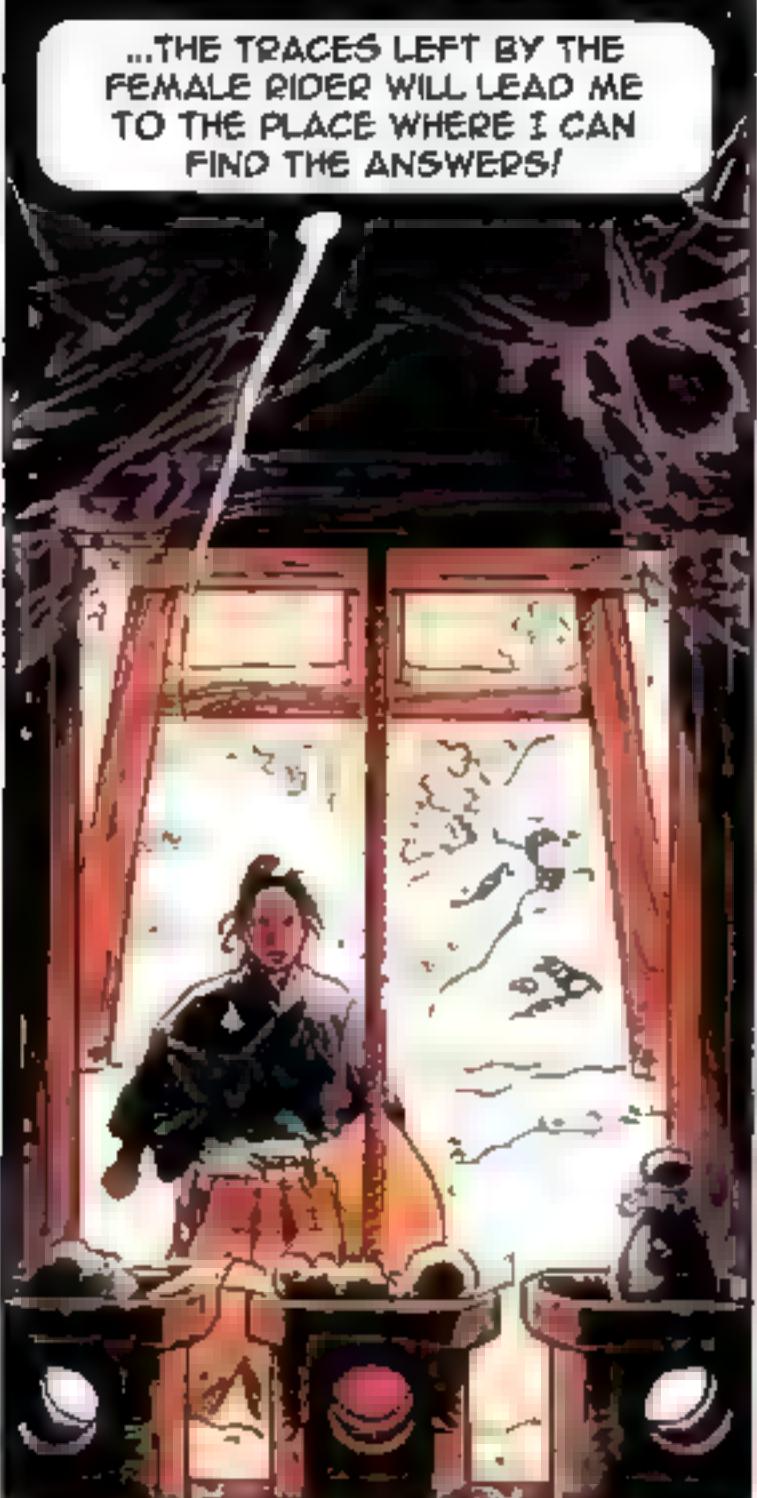


MHH.. TOO ODD TO BE A COINCIDENCE,
IT MUST BE THE HEAD OF THE MAN I
DISCOVERED YESTERDAY! BUT WHY DID
THEY HUMILATE HIM IN SUCH A WAY?!



TN : A MON IS AN EMBLEM/BANNER

...THE TRACES LEFT BY THE FEMALE RIDER WILL LEAD ME TO THE PLACE WHERE I CAN FIND THE ANSWERS!



I HAVE TO KNOW!

In the wintery rice field,
lifted and thrown there,
a red torii.

Bush



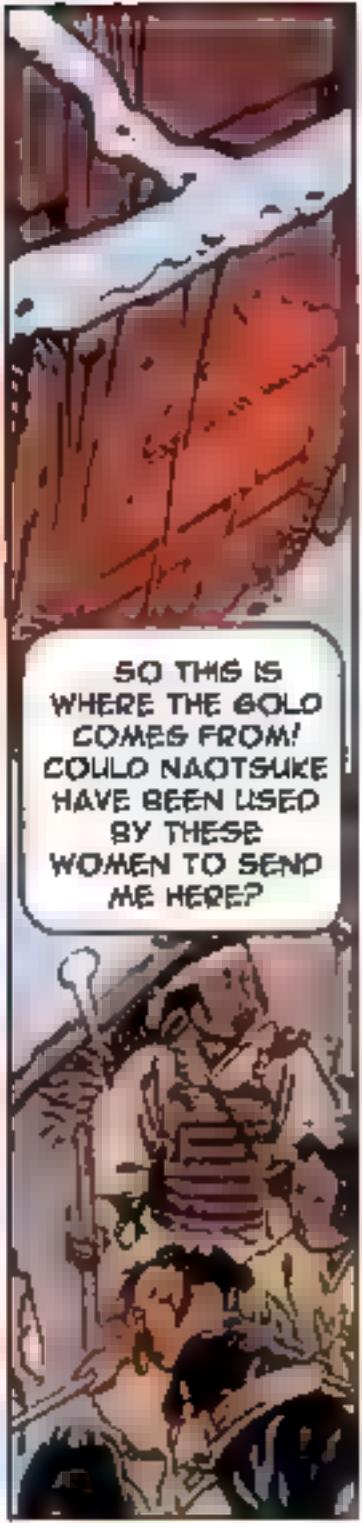
OUR SISTER WILL DIE IF WE DON'T DO ANYTHING!

IT DOESN'T MATTER!
ONLY SERVING THE GODDESS IS IMPORTANT!

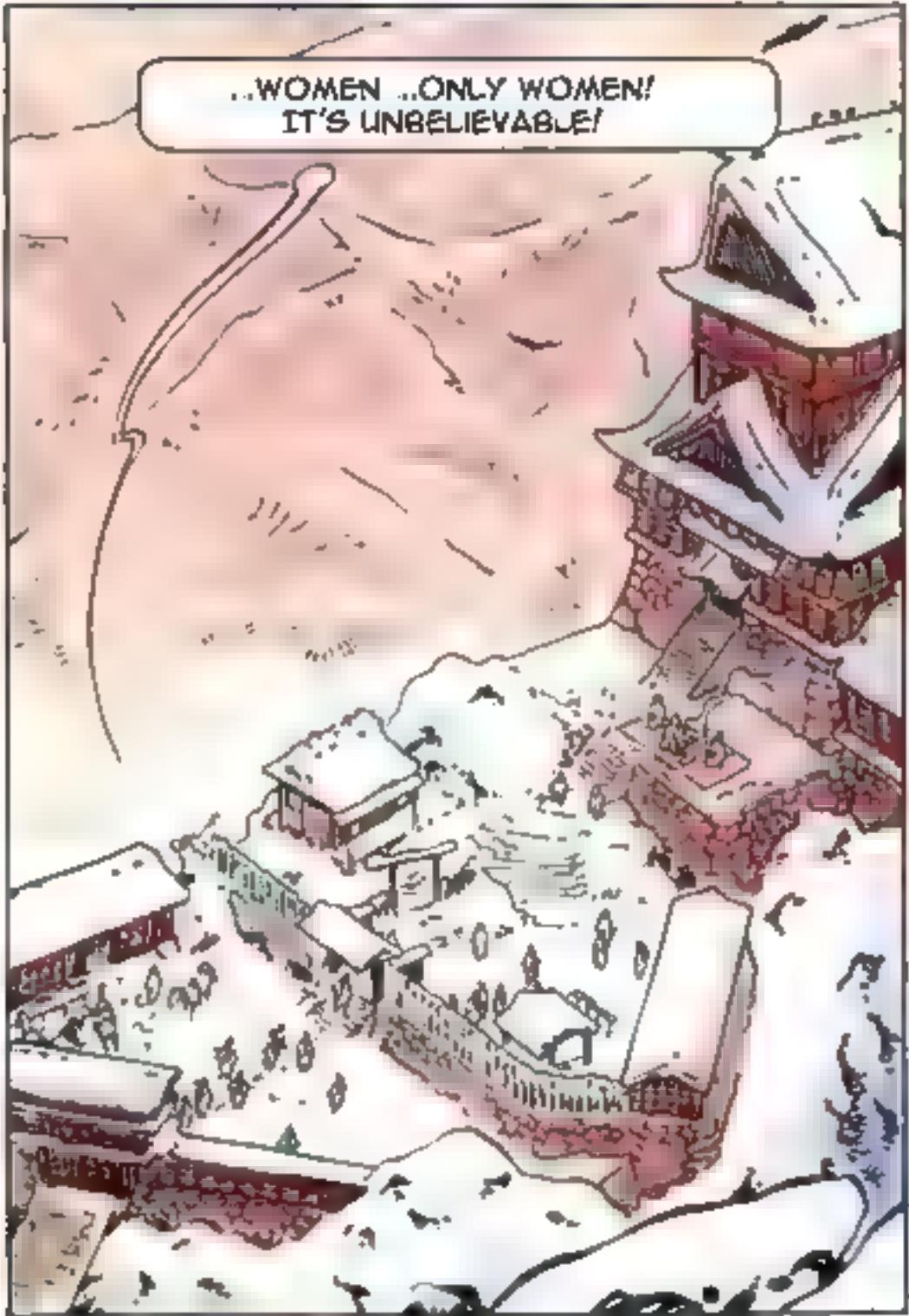




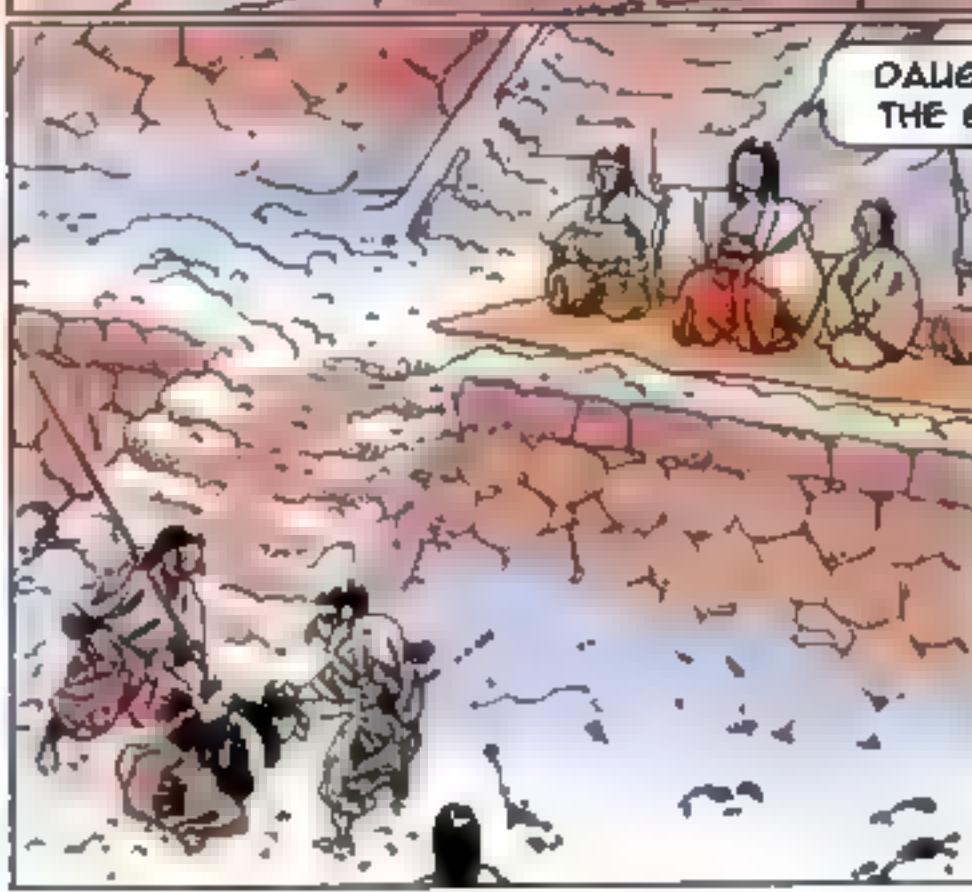




...WOMEN ...ONLY WOMEN!
IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!



DAUGHTERS OF
THE GODDESS!



THE COWARDLY MEN FROM THE VALLEY
KILLED THE NOBLE MEN FROM THE HILLS!
YAMA-NO-KAMI'S LAW ORDERS US TO
RESTORE THE BROKEN BALANCE! THIS
MAN STAINED OUR HEAVENLY VIRGINITY!
HE WHO INFRINGES THE TABOO OF
THE MOUNTAIN MUST DIE!

TOMOMI!

...HOWEVER, MY DAUGHTERS, THIS
MAN IS A SAMURAI! IF HE WILL NOT DIE
IN A SHAMEFULY WAY, HE WILL BE
ALLOWED TO RUN FOR HIS LIFE. THAT
WAY WE WILL RESTORE THE BALANCE!

IF HE REACHES THE VALLEY,
TA-NO-KAMI'S TERRITORY, HE
WILL LIVE. THE HUNT CAN BEGIN!

SAMURAI!
WHEN THE SUN
GOES BEHIND
THE HILLS,
MY DAUGHTERS
WILL HUNT YOU!
NOW RUN!

BUT

I GET IT...

SOON, YOU TOO
WILL BE ALLOWED
TO HUNT FOR
THE GODDESS!

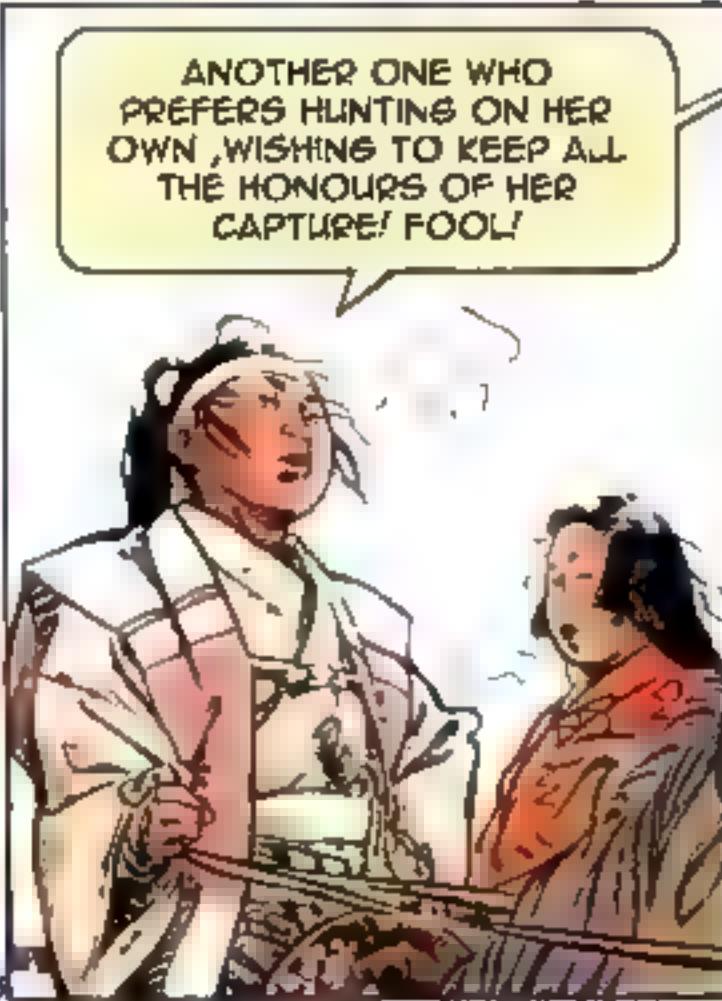
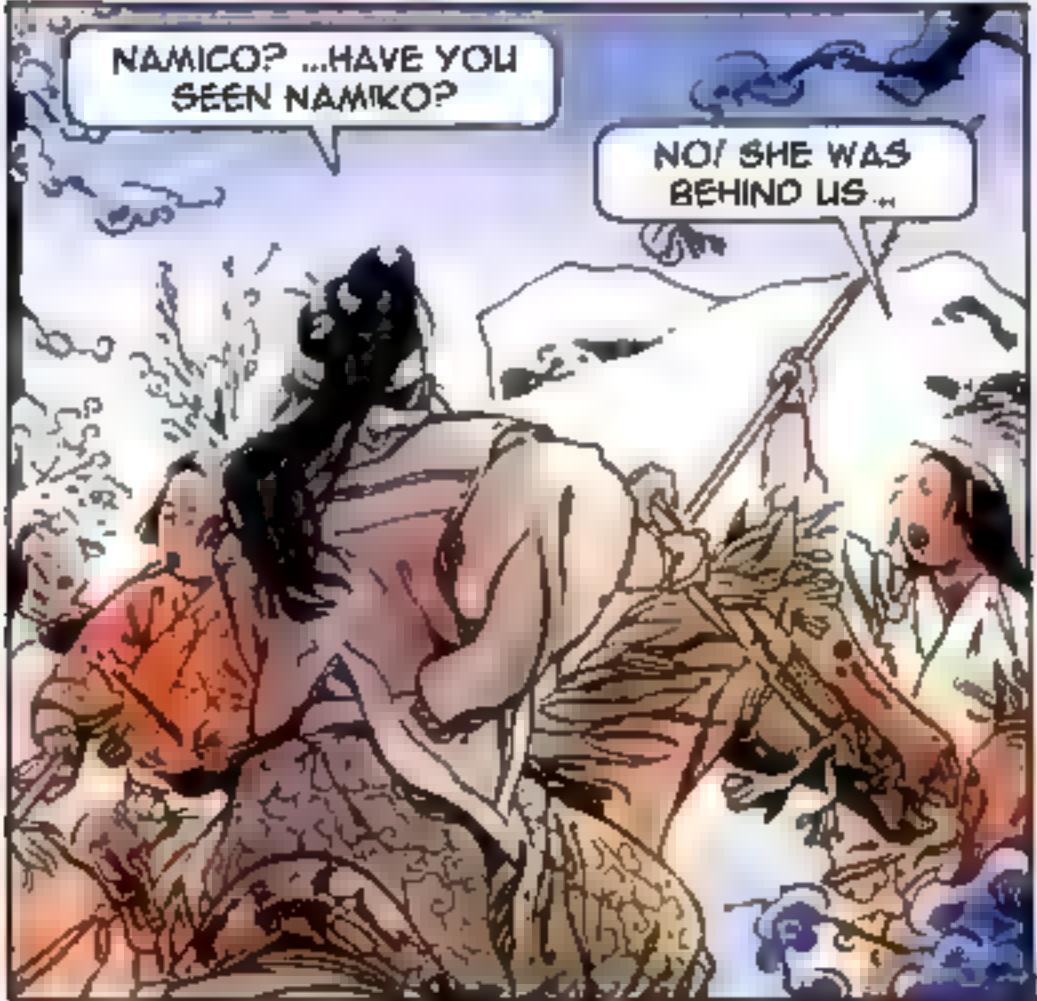
OUTSIDE..
I'M OUTSIDE!
KEEP RUNNING.
DON'T THINK...
LATER...

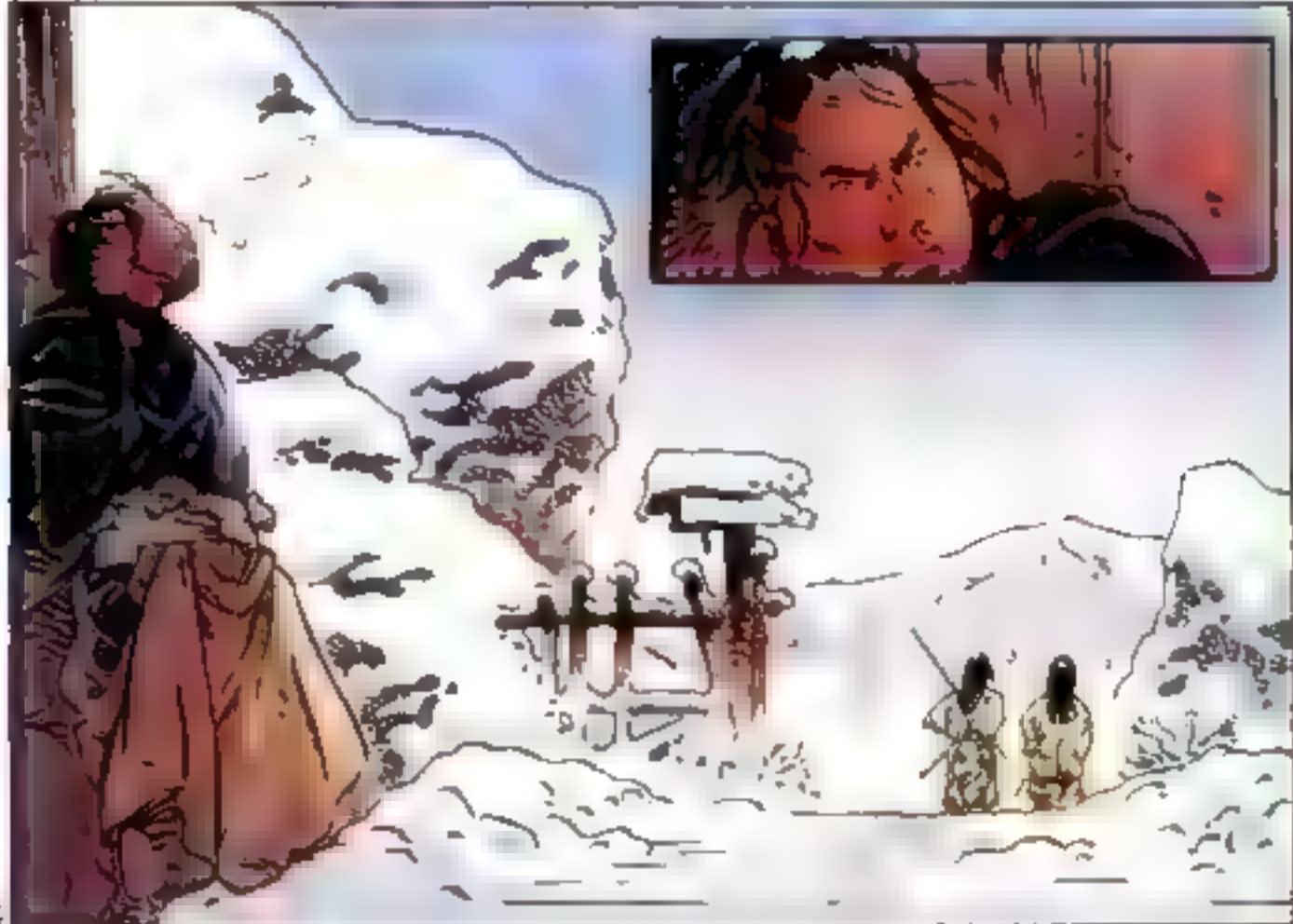
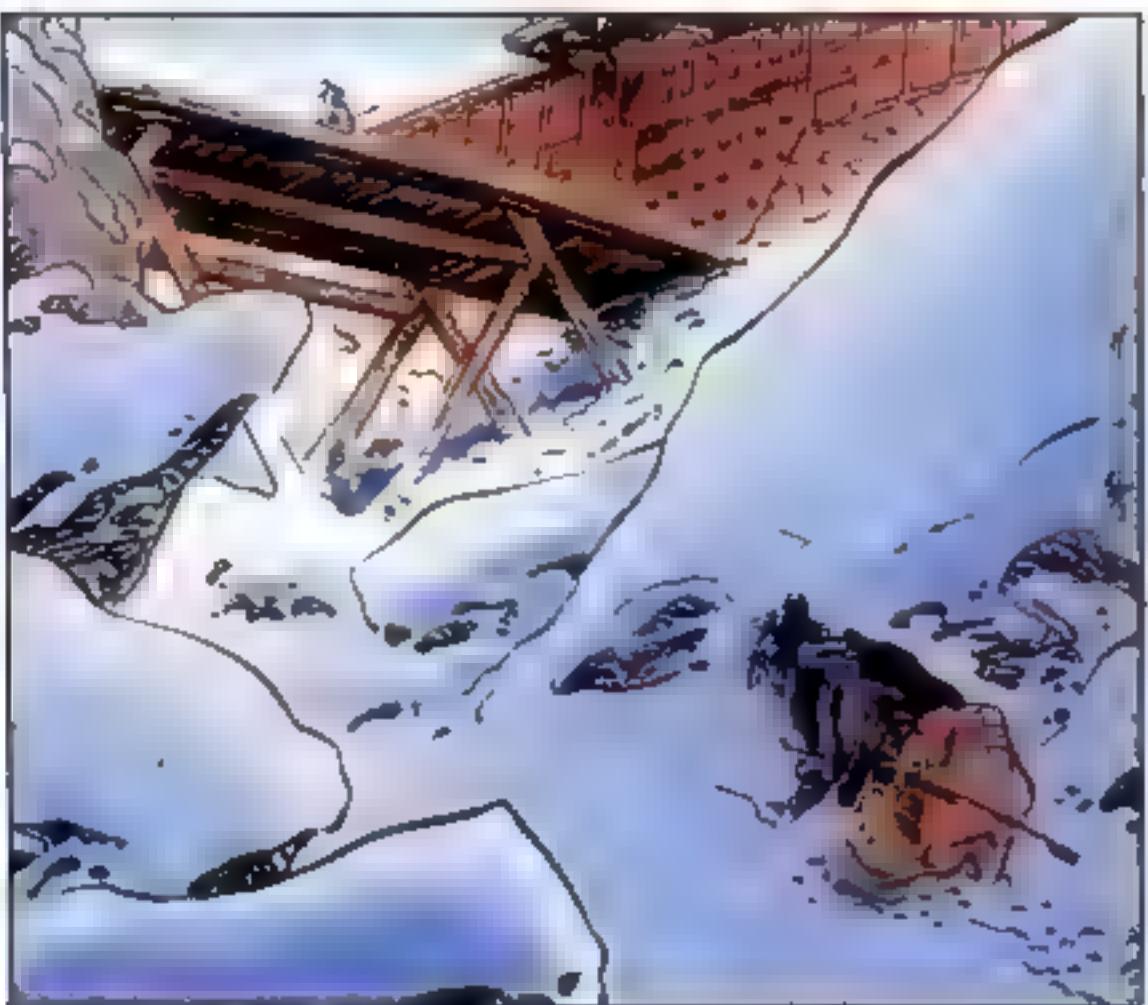


Among the trees of winter
When the axe strokes,
The fragrance filled me.

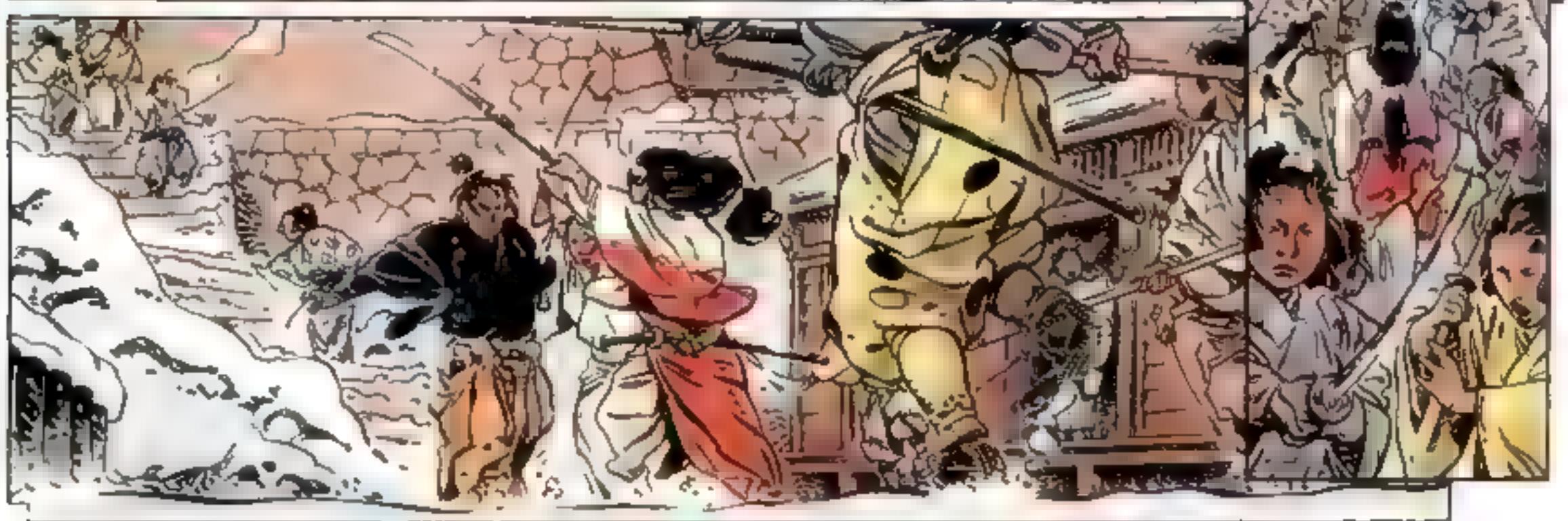
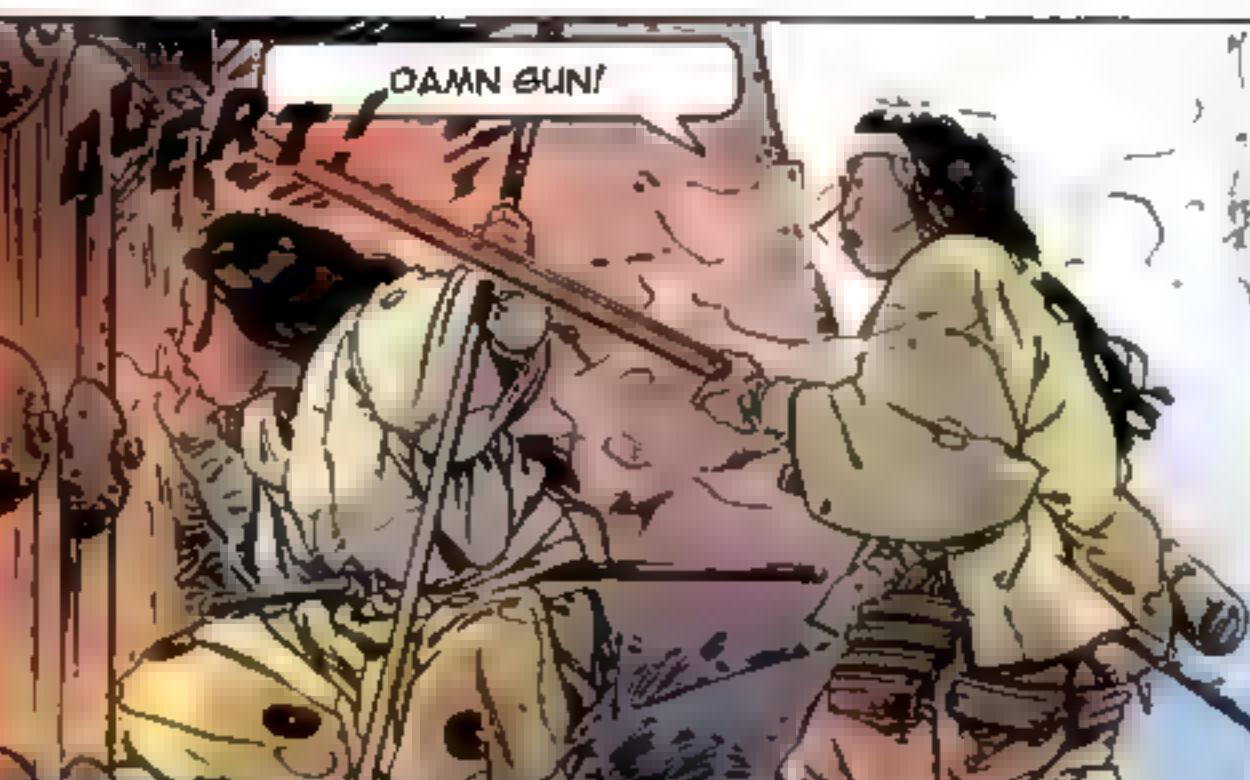
Bushō

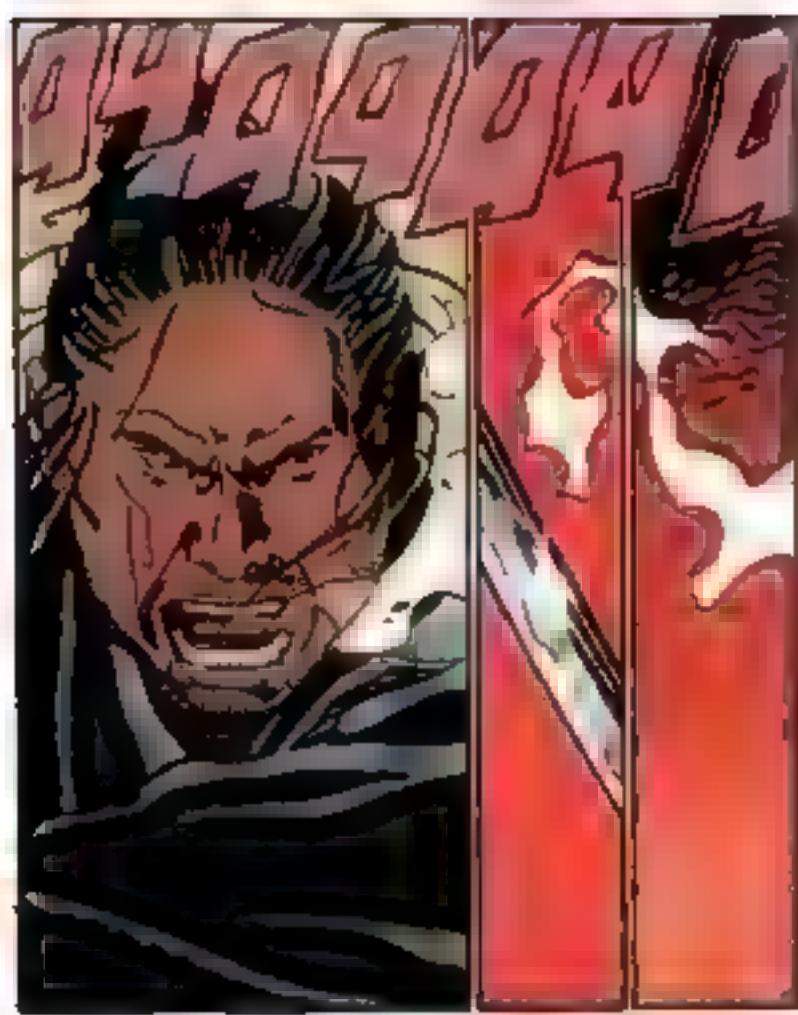


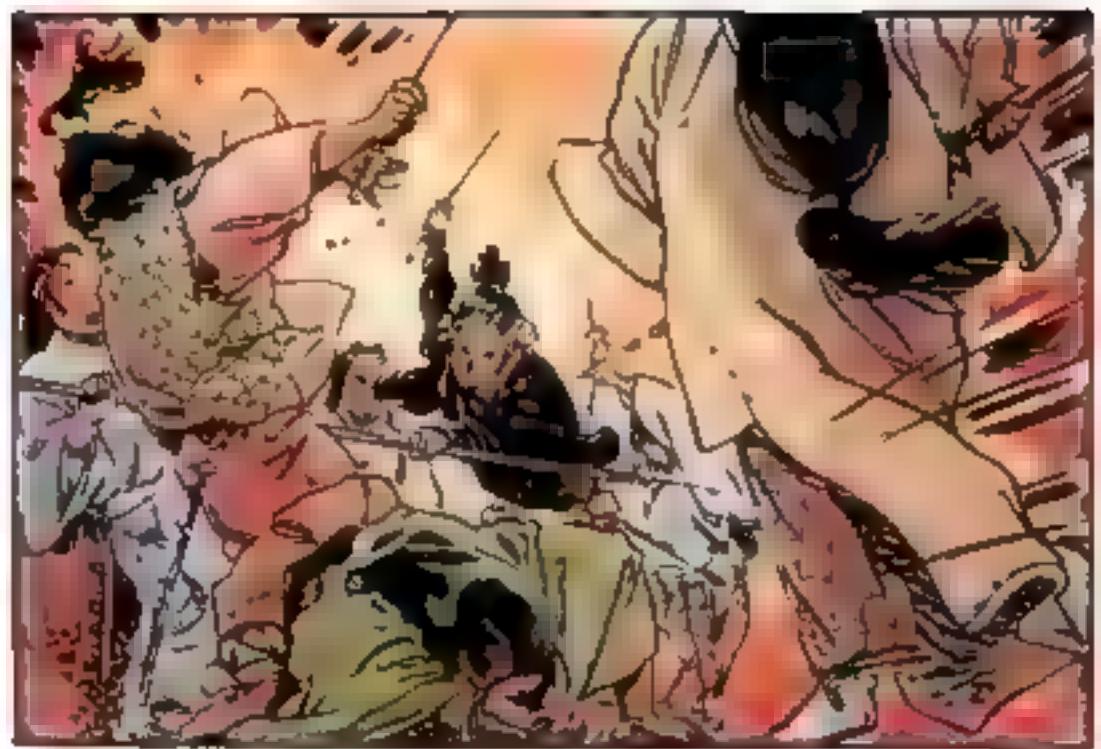




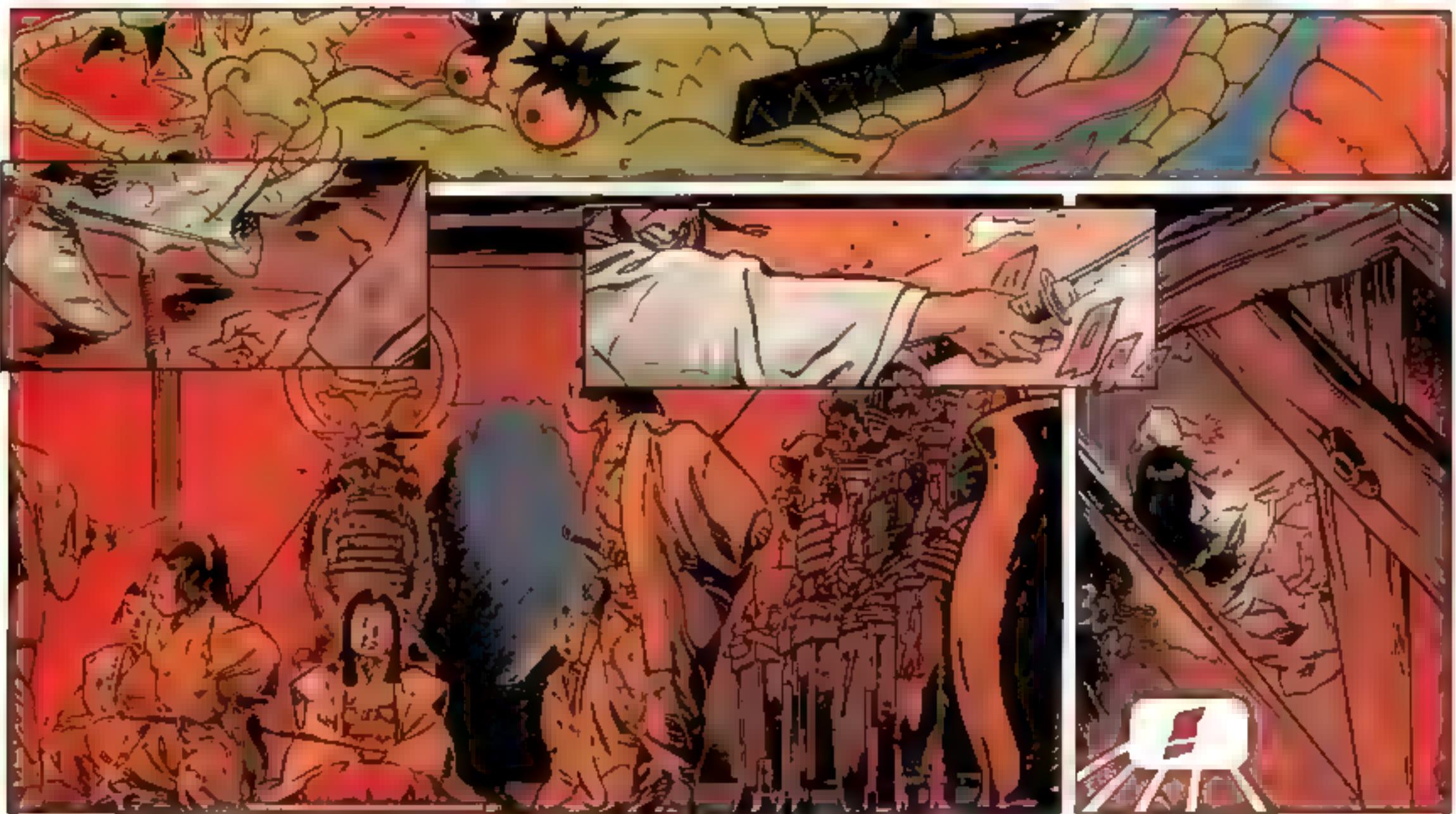












...THE GODDESS SENT ME
A SIGN... A VISION!

I SAW THE MASSACRE
OF OUR CLAN FORTY
YEARS AGO ONCE AGAIN!
VILE PEASANTS WERE
KILLING MY HUSBAND,
MY BROTHERS,
MY SONS...

THIS SAMURA! IS READY TO FIGHT
BRAVELY TO DEATH! EVEN THOUGH
HE KNOWS HE CAN'T WIN, HE CHOSE TO
ATTACK INSTEAD OF RUNNING AWAY .

...HE IS THE SAME AS WE ARE!
OUR KIND! A PREDATOR! FOXES
MUSN'T KILL EACH OTHERS!

COME CLOSER ..

DO NOT FEAR! LET MY
CHILD COME TO ME!

MOTHER!



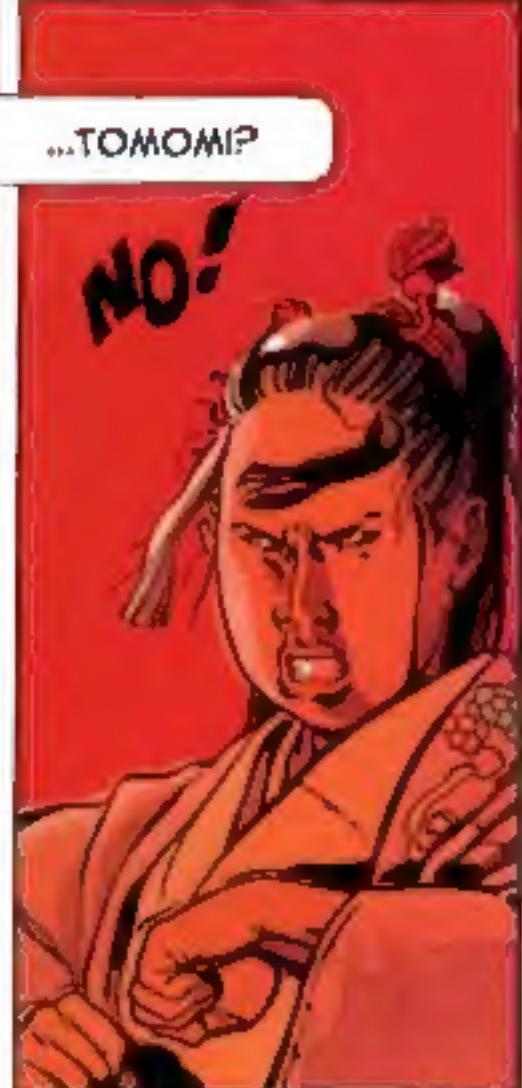
YES... YES! IT IS YOU,
TOJOJI, MY SON! DID THEY
HURT YOU? IT WAS THOSE
PEASANTS, AGAIN? THOSE
WRETCHED SWINES!



IT MUST BE OYABUN'S
DOING ONCE AGAIN! OR
OLD NAOTSUKE! THOSE
TWO... ARE RESPONSIBL
E FOR THE SLAUGHTER
OF OUR FAMILY!
LONG AGO...



I... IF I CAME HERE TODAY AND...
TOOK SO MANY RISKS... IT WAS
TO BRING TOMOMI BACK!



...TOMOMI?

NO!



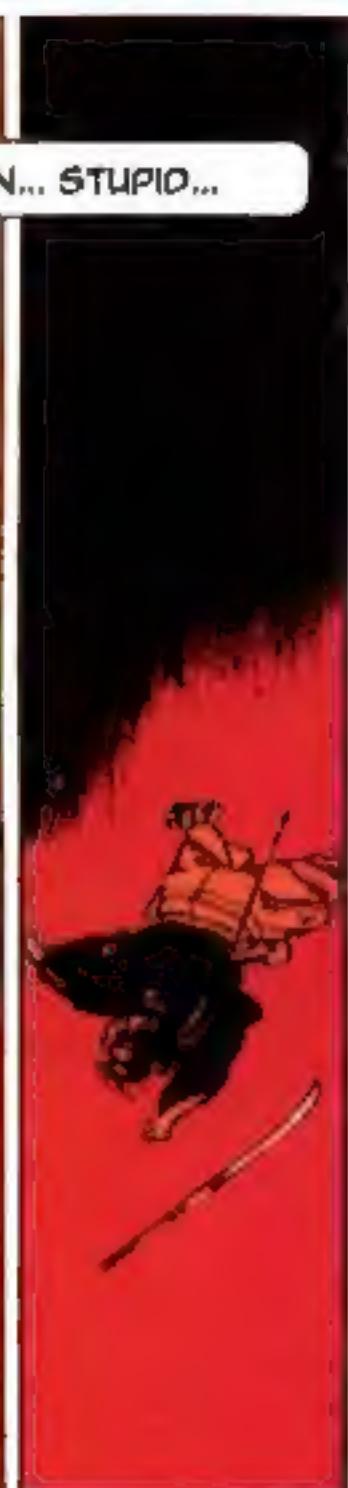
...LET ME STAY HERE,
SAMURAI! I WANT TO STAY
HERE! I DON'T WANT TO GO
BACK TO THAT VALLEY OF
MISERY... I DON'T WANT TO
BE HUNGRY OR SUFFER FROM
THE COLD AGAIN!



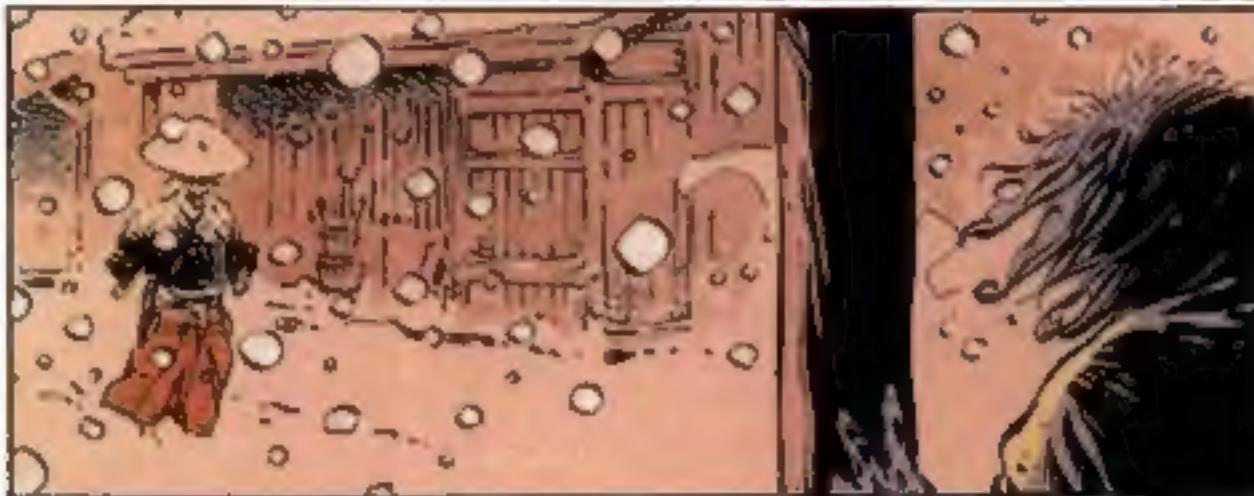
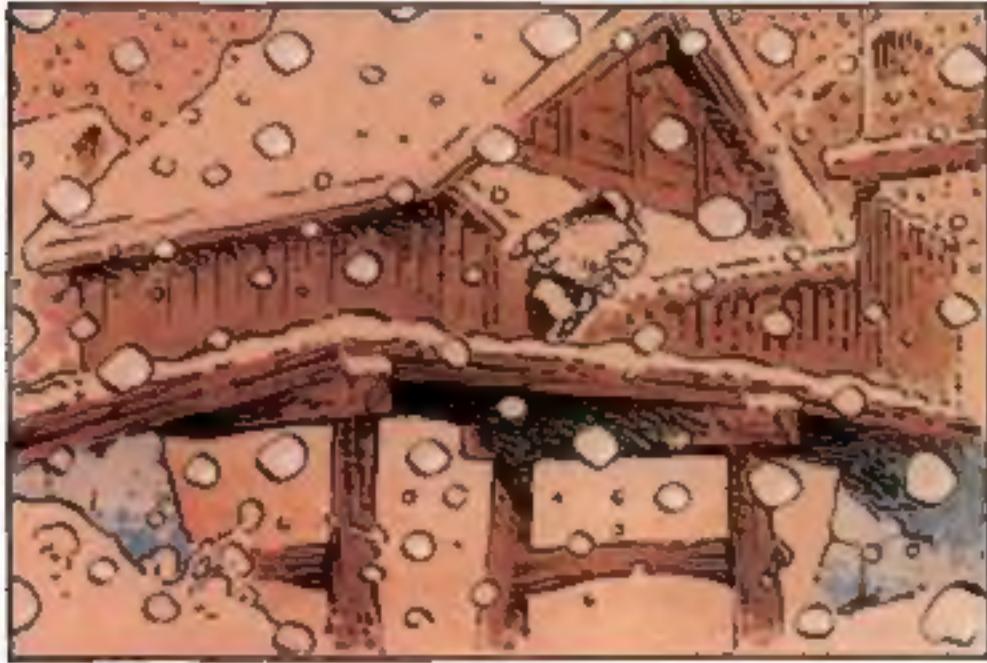
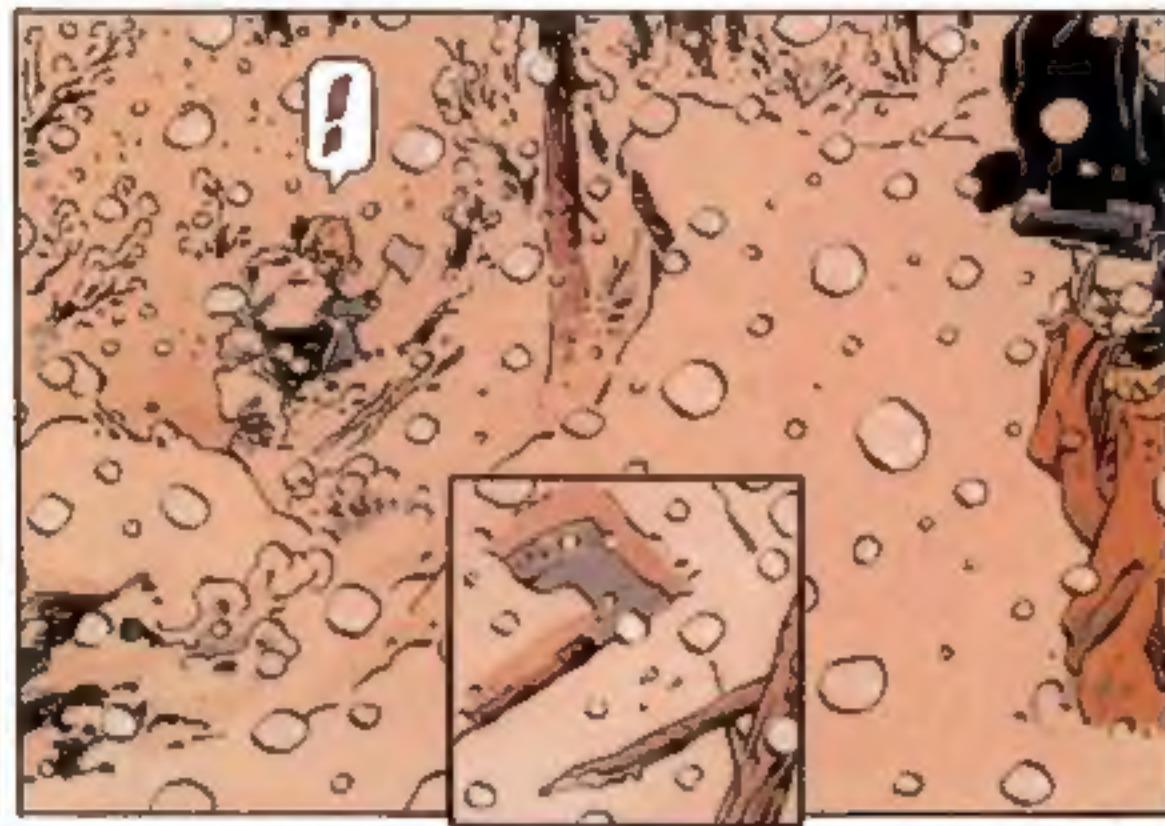
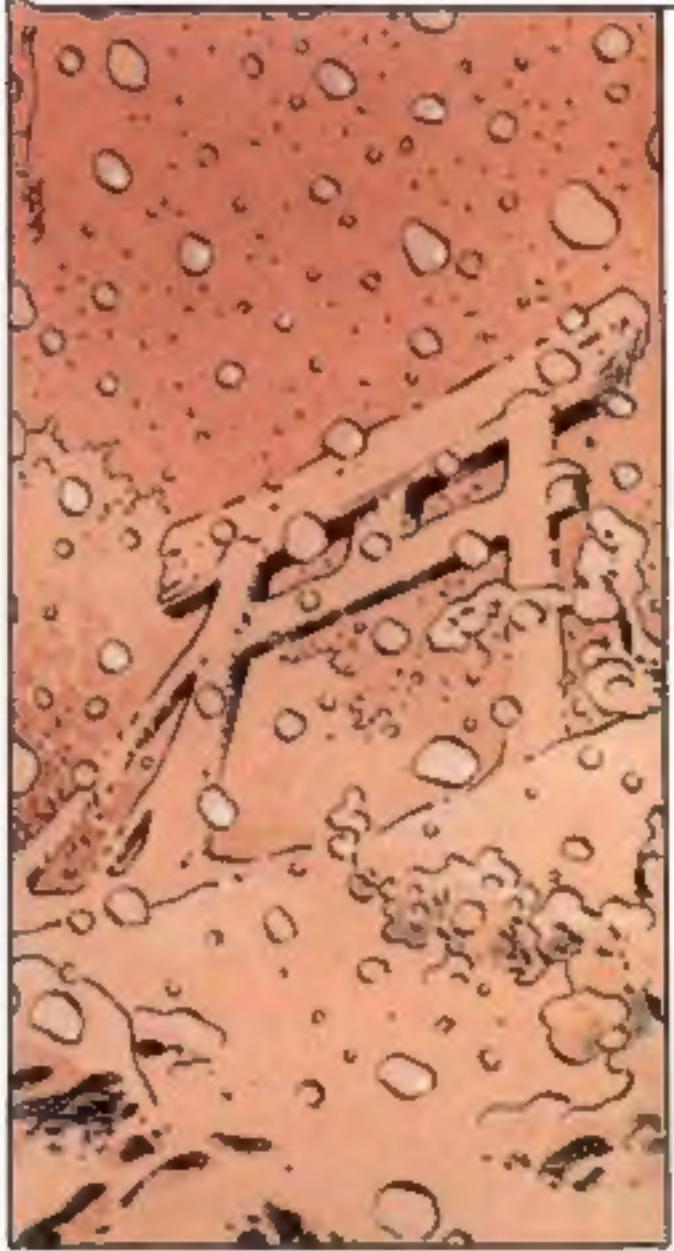
...I ...I HAVE PROBABLY BEEN... STUPID...

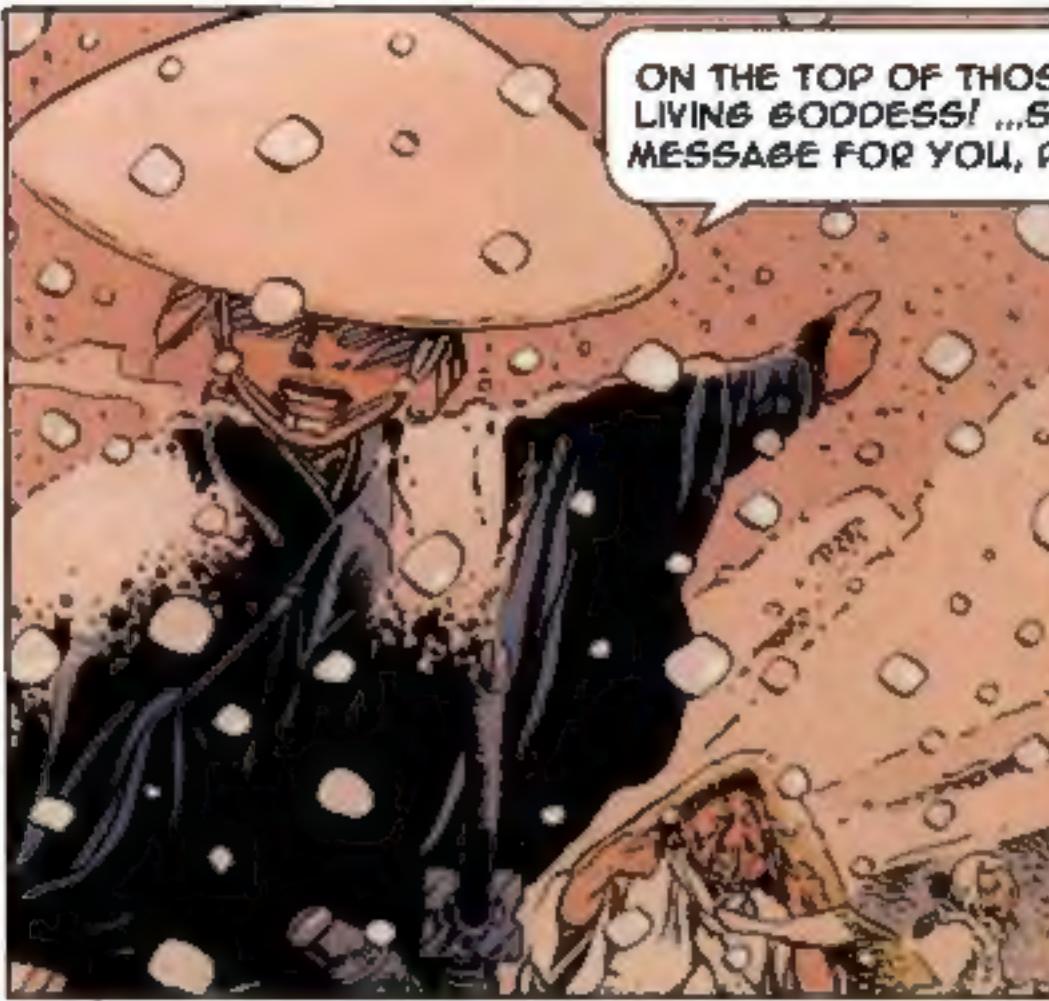


I BELONG HERE, NOW!



And now
Let us contemplate the snow
Until we fall from exhaustion
Bacchus





ON THE TOP OF THOSE MOUNTAINS, I MET THE LIVING GODDESS! ...SHE ENTRUSTED ME WITH A MESSAGE FOR YOU, PEASANTS OF THE VALLEY!



...FOR YOU, WHOSE CHIEFS
MAINTAIN IGNORANT OF THEIR
PAST CRIMES! FOR YOU WHO,
STUPIDLY, YEAR AFTER YEAR,
PAY FOR THEM!



...THE GODDESS TELLS YOU
THAT, NOW, THERE WILL BE NO
MORE SPRING NOR SUMMER
FOR YOU IN THIS VALLEY!



SAMURAI
...TOMOMI?

TOMOMI? ...DON'T
WORRY, SHE'S FINE!
NOW SHE'S WON'T
BE LACKING OF
ANYTHING!



...AS FOR YOU, I'M AFRAID YOU
WILL SUFFER FROM HER ABSENCE
IN THE YEARS TO COME...



THE END

